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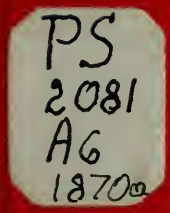
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MEMOIR

OF

WASHINGTON IRVING.

WITH SELECTIONS FROM HIS WORKS, AND CRITICISMS.

By CHARLES ADAMS, D.D.

NEW YORK:
CARLTON & LANAHAN.
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TO

HON. JACOB SLEEPER,

A FRIEND OF MANY YEARS,

This Volume

IS

AFFECTIONATELY AND GRATEFULLY DEDICATED.

PREFACE.

THE "Life and Letters of Washington Irving," in four volumes, prepared by his nephew, Pierre M. Irving, and published since the death of his illustrious uncle, has been for several years before the public, and may be considered a model work of its kind. It seems quite certain, however, that a brief and direct history of Irving, such as would be comprised in a single volume of moderate size, and including slight specimens of some of his more popular compositions, would supply a positive desideratum, and be an acceptable service, especially to multitudes of our youth, and others besides, who would shrink from the expense of a much more voluminous biography.

Washington Irving was one of the distinguished fathers of American Literature, and his service in this field must ever be deemed of great and special importance to his country. Hence it has very seriously impressed the author of this little work that the history and many of the writings of Irving should be as widely known as the language itself, and to

further such an object was a prominent purpose of these pages. Of course to the *literati*, professional men, and students of the country, the eminent author and his works are sufficiently familiar. At the same time, to thousands of both sexes, outside of these several classes, the author of the "Sketch Book" is still a stranger, and to this day the magical pen he wielded has brought no instruction or amusement.

If, therefore, to such this unpretending volume shall tend to bring the distinguished writer and his Works more prominently to notice, and entice to a still wider perusal and study of them, then will our humble effort not be in vain. And what was remarked by Edward Everett in the North American Review touching one of Mr. Irving's volumes may be well applied to the majority of his published writings: "The American father who can afford it and does not buy a copy (of 'Tour on the Prairies') does not deserve that his sons should prefer his fireside to the bar-room, the pure and chaste pleasures of a cultivated taste to the gross indulgences of sense. He does not deserve that his daughters should pass their leisure hours in maidenly seclusion, and the improvement of their minds, rather than to flaunt on the sidewalks by day, and pursue, by night, an eternal round of tasteless dissipation."

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MEMOIR

OF

WASHINGTON IRVING.

CHAPTER I.

IT was a deeply interesting point in our history when Washington Irving was born. The war of the Revolution was just closing, peace was dawning upon the land, the independence for which "the fathers" had struggled so long and so manfully was about to be recognized by the mother country, and the United States of America was now to commence as a nation its great and eventful career.

Washington was born in April, 1783, and grew to be very much such a boy as might be supposed from a contemplation of his developed manhood. He was a sprightly, buoyant, witty, somewhat mischievous, yet not a vicious child, deeply affectionate toward his parents, especially his mother, who, as is natural, felt a mother's

pride in her son. "But it grieved her that he did not take more kindly to religion; and at times, in the midst of one of his effusions of wit and drollery, she would look at him with a half-mournful admiration, and exclaim, 'O Washington, if you were only good!'"

The meaning of this wish doubtless was that her beloved child were *religiously* good—that, amid all his sprightliness and all his promising traits, he were cherishing in his heart the fear of God, and a joyful trust in his mercy through Christ the Saviour. And as with a thoughtful and Christian eye we trace the career of this child along his youth and riper years, we cannot forbear the earnest regret that his mother's pious wish for her child had not been realized. Happy had it been, as well for the world as for himself, if God's Holy Spirit had been invited to enkindle right early that eminent genius, and inspire for the highest good of the race that brilliant pen!

Born, as Irving was, just as the war ended, it was eminently fit that a child so beautiful and promising should receive a name that had become so celebrated. "Washington's work is ended," said the mother, "and the child shall

be named after him." And very pleasant and noteworthy is the incident that, when the great Washington returned to New York as President of the United States, a Scotch maid, servant of the Irving family, accosted him one morning, and pointing to the lad scarcely yet emerged from his virgin trowsers, exclaimed, "Please your honor, here's a bairn was named for you." And Washington placed his hand on the head of the little boy and gave him his blessing. All this can hardly fail to remind us of a similar transaction when One infinitely greater than Washington took little children up in his arms and blessed them.

The anecdotes told us of Irving's early boyhood are highly characteristic, and indicate to a considerable extent the genius and character of the forthcoming man. At eleven years old we find him becoming much interested in certain kinds of reading, among which books of voyages and travels held a conspicuous place. By constant perusal of works of this character he became inflamed with a passion for going abroad to see the world for himself. "How wistfully," said he, "would I wander about the pier heads in fine weather, and watch the parting ships

bound to distant climes; with what longing eyes would I gaze after their lessening sails, and waft myself in imagination to the ends of the earth!"

A more damaging tendency and passion soon affected this ardent and talented boy. Having, on one occasion, attended a theater, he is represented as being so delighted with the acting that henceforward he felt and cherished a special fondness for theatrical entertainments. Hence, as we trace him through all his youthful years, and in maturer life, and amid his sojournings in one and another city, at home or abroad, we cannot help discerning that the theater was one of the very prominent amusements in which he indulged. It is painful, too, to notice that his early indulgence and pleasure in this species of amusement was the "sweetness of stolen waters." His attendance at the theater being under parental interdict, it is represented as his habit that he would go early and see the play, then hurry home to prayers at the hour of nine, retire afterward to his room as if for the night, pass slyly out of his window, and steal back to the theater to witness the afterpiece; after which he would return by the same way to his room.

Let all boys remember that examples like this should never be imitated; and that while the amusement itself, with the usual accompaniments, is more than doubtful, his means of securing it, and the disobedience prompting those means, were a positive wrong, and could never be reviewed with an approving conscience.

A very important lesson for parents is also here. It is likely that for young and imaginative people few amusements present a stronger or more dangerous fascination than the theater. Such youth, having once tasted this pleasure, long for its repetition, while the dangerous appetite "grows by what it feeds on" until many a strong tie, not excepting that of integrity itself, often yields to the fatal fascination of the siren. That young Irving was ever so sadly drawn into this vortex does not appear, save in the instance specified. But that the theater formed one of the capital charms of his youthful years is painfully evident. How far this kind of indulgence and recreation operated to prevent him from early following his parents in the way of piety cannot be estimated; but that an important influence was thus exerted in the direction alluded to seems morally certain.

Young Irving was not liberally educated; and we trace him as a school-boy, and in one and another school, until he reached the age of fifteen. At the last school which he attended, where he remained about eighteen months, he studied the Latin language, which seems to have been his nearest approach to a classical education. Mathematical studies appear not to have been pursued beyond common arithmetic; while this was, with him, one of the most irksome of his studies. In composition, as may well be supposed, he was far more interested and successful; a circumstance which seems to have often led him to "exchange work" with one and another of his mates—they working out his sums, and he writing out their compositions.

Thus, before attaining his sixteenth year, was the school education of Washington Irving finished. It is certainly an interesting fact in the history of American literature that he who is recognized as one of its chief pioneers and fathers was himself but a self-educated man. For half a century have the thousands of undergraduates in our colleges seized eagerly upon the works of this man as their favorite author

in the department of *belles lettres;* and he who, among the numerous college and public libraries, would light upon the books the most handled and worn of all others, must not overlook the fascinating volumes of Irving. Nor is the charm attendant upon his pen that which affects merely the tyro in literature. The ripe and mature scholar roams with equal and even superior pleasure amid these gardens of beauty; and the "Great Wizard of the North," with as much enthusiasm as the ardent youth amid his varied classic exercises, was wont to discuss, with no ordinary relish, the pleasant viands supplied by this extraordinary caterer of literary delights. How is all this? We may pause only to respond that it is not in colleges or college training; it is not in education; not in surroundings; not in smiles or sorrows, riches or poverty; not in travel, observation, or all learning and knowledge. It is in the man himself; and in something there which, like the century plant, blooms not every year nor every generation.

CHAPTER II.

AT sixteen years of age, therefore, his school studies being finished, young Irving commenced the study of the law, or, rather, he entered a law office, sojourning there during two years, in which the study of *belles-lettres* seems to have been far more diligently and successfully pursued than that of law. Indeed, it is difficult to conceive of a youth less adapted to the studies and practice of law than he. Vastly more congenial with his temperament and tastes was it to be reveling amid the wild and beautiful scenery which stretched away in various directions from the city of his birth. Hence we see him gladly escaping from the law office, with its arid studies and rough and thorny associations, to commit himself, with a friend or two, to a long excursion up the Hudson, and among the then wild regions beyond. Far away above Albany, where at the beginning of the century was the frontier of civilization, dwelt an elder sister, who, at a tender age,

had gone, with her youthful husband, to dwell amid those northern outskirts. Thither Irving was bound. It was the year 1800, when steamboats and railroads were unknown; and this was his first voyage up that noble stream whose shores were in after time to be made classic by the witchery of his pen, and on whose banks would one day repose the lovely villa where, after long and weary sojournings in foreign lands, he would make his earthly resting-place.

Long afterward he wrote of this early voyage and its pleasant experience. There was the boy-like eagerness to embark, the final floating away of the sloop from the wharf into the broad stream, the exchange of adieus with friends ashore, the grand scenery of the Palisades, the "intense delight" of that first sail through the Highlands, the overhanging forests, the "witching effect" of the Kaatskill Mountains—now seeming to approach the shore, then receding and melting away into the hazy distance. It was his lot in subsequent years to traverse some of the rivers of the old world, and such as are renowned in history and song; yet these, he remarks, were never able to efface or dim

the pictures of his native stream, so early stamped upon his memory. He would always revert to them with a filial feeling, and with a recurrence of the joyous associations of his boyhood.

A year or two afterward we find him, in company with a friend, on another excursion up the Hudson—at the Springs, and elsewhere. At this time he is an invalid, with consumptive symptoms and tendencies, and he returns home with health still drooping and uncertain.

Now it is when, at nineteen years of age, we trace the first movements of Irving's pen with a view to publication. They consist in a series of humorous contributions under the signature of "Jonathan Oldstyle," and were published in the "Morning Chronicle." Even these earliest attempts of his pen were popular, and were extensively copied in the prints of the time; and twenty years afterward, when their author was abroad in Europe and had now became famous, they were, without his consent or approbation, collected and republished.

In the following summer Irving was one of a very interesting party made up for an excursion to Ogdensburg, Montreal, and Quebec. This

company comprised, besides the subject of this sketch, two highly respectable families, consisting each of husband, wife, and daughter, and the expedition must have promised, of course, no small amount of pleasure to the several parties, and not the least to the young gentleman himself. It proved a scene of much and varied adventure. As usual, their voyage up the river was by sloop. Arriving at Albany, we soon track them to Saratoga and Ballston, whence they make a flying visit to Utica, then in the wilderness. Then we see them, in wagons, struggling through thick woods, and muddy roads, and blackened stumps, and fallen trees. Matters wax worse and worse. The travelers are now out walking in the mud; then, launched in a scow on Beach River, they are overwhelmed with torrents of rain; then, going ashore, they lodge in a log-hut on beds spread upon the floor. In the morning they are off again upon the muddy stream; anon, in wagons, once more blundering amid stumps and roots; again stuck fast, and the whole party taking to their feet, the rain meanwhile descending in torrents, young Irving frequently up to his "middle in mud and water." Amid the woods and mud and

rain they seek to shelter the ladies in a little bark shed of capacity sufficient to hold three; but half of it falls down as they attempt to creep under it, and the rain falls in floods, falls as they never have seen it fall before; the wind blows a hurricane; the trees shake, and bend, and crack, and threaten every moment to fall and crush the frightened company. They flee as from destruction, dragging themselves along with painful difficulty, until they again reach a hut, their only lodging-place. Suffice it to add, that after other similar and hideous mishaps, to their great joy they came in sight of *Ostegatchie*, whose present name is Ogdensburg.

Fifty years afterward, and when Irving was seventy years of age, he went and looked again upon this interesting locality. There for a long time he sat, his thoughts running back through the long vista of departed years, and lighting upon the happy beings who, fifty years before, were with him there. Every one of them was now passed away, and himself was the sole survivor of all that joyous company. Quietly and safely at home they had lived—at home they had died while he still lived, though amid these intervening years he had traversed seas, and

wandered over distant lands, and encountered so many dangers and hardships. It seemed wonderful to him as he sat there pensive and lonely, and doubtless he wept amid those interesting and somber memories. And why, in such a connection, must there be no recognition of that kind and favoring Providence that had accompanied him, and watched him, and shielded him at every step of his long and various wanderings? There sat that man of seventy years. A long and prosperous life had been his. His name had become world-renowned, his fame world-wide. Few mortals had been so extensively honored, loved, and caressed as he. Every circumstance was adapted to point him to the divine hand. How graceful would have been an ascription of praise! and how graceful, too, as well as tasteful, would have been its public record!

CHAPTER III.

AT twenty-one years of age Washington Irving was a young gentleman of more than ordinary interest. His portrait of about this period of his life, while a slightly boyish aspect seems still to linger with him, presents a countenance singularly well-formed and comely. His forehead was full, high, expansive, and partially and gracefully shaded by flowing locks of hair carelessly curling around it; his calm and expressive eyes were overarched by eyebrows of perfect regularity; his nose nearly straight, and formed with classic and faultless gracefulness; his mouth rather small, with lips full, and slightly elevated at their extremities, and thus hinting at that rich vein of humor for which he was so remarkable; chin long, yet finely turned; the head lofty, and clothed with abundant hair carelessly worn; the entire *tout ensemble* conveying to us the impression that this must have been a youth of rare personal beauty and attractiveness.

Harmonious with his fine personal appearance were his mental accomplishments, and the kindly and genial elements of his social character. His talents as a writer had already began to be apparent, while his conversational powers were similar to what he ascribed to one of his brothers, being characterized by "rich, mellow humor, range of anecdote, quick sensibility, and fine colloquial flow."

No wonder that such a youth was the idol of the family circle, or that he began to attract the attention and interest of a constantly widening circle of friends. But, alas! this beautiful youth came up to his majority smitten with disease. His consumptive tendencies have already been alluded to, and evident alarm on his account was now beginning to be felt by his numerous friends, and especially those of his own father's family. How could such a son and brother as this be given up to disease, decline, and death! Must such a star of beauty set so soon? and shall a luminary rising so brilliantly be quenched in quick and cold eclipse? It must not be. This child of promise must be rescued from the destroyer, and for a boon so precious as his health and life he

must be given up for a season and sent abroad to a foreign land. "It is with delight," wrote his eldest brother to him after his departure for Europe, "that we share the world with you; and one of our greatest sources of happiness is that fortune is daily putting it in our power thus to add to the comfort and enjoyment of one so very near to us all." No wonder that he was "heavy-hearted" as he sailed away, and as he saw the spires of the city sink from his view. That day was melancholy and lonesome, and as at night he turned into his berth he was sick at heart.

Such is sometimes the "low estate" befalling frail and helpless man—abroad upon the dark and heaving ocean, reclining that night in his lowly berth, an invalid youth—his life hanging as if by a thread—wafted each moment farther from the friends and home he loves, bound to a land of strangers, unknown, unheeded, sick, faint, and sad. Will he ever rally? and will brighter and more prosperous days ever rise on his vision to gladden his sinking, sorrowing heart?

But Irving's characteristic elasticity prevailed, and, giving thanks to the "fountain of

health and good spirits," he presently revived from his state of dullness and discouragement—arose above his homesickness. While anticipating the classic and pleasant scenes he was about to enjoy in a foreign land, he went on his way with cheerful and joyful steps.

After a pleasant voyage, with mild and gentle weather, and but a few hours of seasickness, our traveler arrived at Bordeaux; and as he contemplated the buildings, ancient churches, and the manners of the people, he seemed to himself to have come to another world.

CHAPTER IV.

IRVING remained several weeks at Bordeaux, improving himself in the French language. Here also he commenced a copious journal, noting down in pencil marks whatever interested him, designing to expand and perfect them in his intervals of leisure.

His journey from Bordeaux to Paris was quite circuitous, and somewhat eventful. He starts off in the old, cumbersome French "diligence," and the route is up along the banks of the Garonne. Among his fellow-travelers is a "little doctor," an American, brimful of animation, and overflowing with good nature and talk, knowing every thing, and with whom embassadors, consuls, etc., were intimate acquaintances. This new acquaintance, being an experienced traveler, proved to be frequently useful to Irving, as well as "a continual fund of amusement," and on parting with him at Meze, he at once began to realize the loss thus sustained. With much pleasure, however, he encounters the

"little doctor" again at Montpelier, and remarks: "I shall travel in company with him, and by that means be protected from extortion. I find he is a more important character than I at first supposed."

From Marseilles the two travelers journeyed on together to Nice, where, after a miserable "red-tape" detention of five weeks, Irving sailed to Genoa. Here he saluted with great delight an old acquaintance and friend from New York. "You," he writes to a friend at home, "who have never been from home in a land of strangers and for some time without friends, cannot conceive the joy, the rapture of meeting with a favorite companion in a distant part of the world."

Genoa proved to Irving a sunny and delightful haven, and especially after so many difficulties and detentions in reaching it. Here he seems to have gained access to the most elevated and refined society, contracted many valuable friendships, and, as may be reasonably supposed, was a special favorite among the more gay and fashionable circles of that renowned city. Weeks and months he lingered amid these pleasant associations, and expresses

himself as so far from being weary, that he every day became more and more delighted with his sojourn there. Meantime "health," he writes, "has new-strung my limbs, and endowed me with an elasticity of spirits that gilds every scene with sunshine, and heightens every enjoyment." *

Irving now embarked for Sicily, leaving "sweet Genoa and all its friendly inhabitants behind" him. Arriving, he visited several of the principal cities of that famous island. Touching at Messina, he sailed to Syracuse, and having, among other curious objects, visited the famous "Ear of Dionysius the Tyrant," he journeyed north to Catania, and ascended Mount Etna as far as his guide would accompany him. Thence, by a dismal journey across the island, he visited Palermo, and then embarked for Naples. Arriving there, he found,

* A singular faculty this young gentleman must certainly have possessed of introducing himself into the higher circles of society wherever he travels. That this should have been altogether facile and natural after he had become famous in authorship is easy to perceive; but how, as an unknown and untitled young stranger, he secured such an advantage is more mysterious. He seems from the very outset to have walked up among the nobles of every land he visits as if he were one of them and "to the manor born."

to his great delight, an abundance of letters from home. Some interesting friends also greeted him here, with a party of whom he made a night visit to Vesuvius, at that time in a state of eruption, and came near being overwhelmed with "dense torrents of the most noxious smoke." The crowd and bustle of Naples was not to the taste of our traveler, and he gladly bade it adieu that he might "repose himself in the silent retreats of Rome." Here, also, he found several of his countrymen, among whom was Washington Allston, the artist.

Allston was a native of South Carolina, born in 1779. He was a slender child, and his parents were advised to send him North to enjoy its more bracing airs. He was, accordingly sent to Newport, R. I., at seven years of age, and placed at school, where he continued for ten years. He early evinced a genius for painting, receiving some aid and encouragement from a Mr. King, who had enjoyed a partial artistic education. A more important acquaintance formed by young Allston was Edward Malbone, a native of Newport, who evinced much promise as a miniature painter. These two youths seemed to have formed a mutual friendship; and Malbone after-

ward residing in Boston while Allston was in college at Harvard, their intimacy was continued through a series of years. From Malbone Allston derived much advantage in his earlier efforts as an artist. His leisure was occupied with sketches, copying, and drawing; and, though having but few helps, he soon attained a wonderful degree of knowledge in the higher elements of the painting art. On his graduation he returned to his home in the South, where he found his friend Malbone occupied with the practice of his art; and, shortly afterward, the two friends embarked for London with a view of improving themselves in art studies. Allston at once entered the Royal Academy as a student, and became intimate with the artist, Benjamin West. Here he devoted himself for several years, and with great diligence and success, to artistic studies. It was here that Irving and Allston first met, and became attached to each other in warm and life-long friendship. Allston was three or four years the senior of Irving, and the latter describes his friend as being peculiarly agreeable —having a form light and graceful, large blue eyes, black silken hair, "waving and curling

around a pale, expressive countenance." He adds that every thing about him bespoke the man of intellect and refinement. His conversation was copious, animated, and highly graphic, warmed by a genial sensibility and benevolence, and enlivened by a chaste and gentle humor.*

It is a curious fact that Irving's intimate association with Allston, joined with the beautiful Italian scenery, pictures, statuary, fountains, and gardens, had at this time well-nigh influenced him to turn his attention to painting, and, like his friend, devote himself to it as a life pursuit. But a wise Providence seems to have overruled this arrangement that he might become a master in a different department of the world of art. "My lot in life," said he, "was differently cast. Doubts and fears gradually clouded over my prospect; the rainbow tints faded away; I began to apprehend a sterile reality; so I gave up the

* Allston subsequently spent several years in Italy—returned home in 1809, married a sister of Dr. Channing, and returned to London, where he resided for a term of years and executed many paintings of distinguished excellence. Returning to the United States in 1818, he passed the remainder of his life in Boston and Cambridge in slender health, yet exercising as he was able his cherished art. His principal work, however, "Belshazzar's Feast," he left unfinished, and died in 1848 at the age of sixty-four.

transient but delightful prospect of remaining in Rome with Allston and turning painter."

Before leaving Rome Irving made the acquaintance of Madame de Stael, whom he describes as a woman of great strength of mind and understanding, and was "astounded at the amazing flow of her conversation." This distinguished lady was a native of Paris, born in 1766, and was, consequently, not quite forty years old when Irving became acquainted with her at Rome. Her father, Baron de Necker, was a wealthy Swiss banker, whom she loved almost to idolatry. She was well educated, and, being early thrown into the society of distinguished persons, she soon acquired the art of brilliant conversation which was so impressive and surprising to Irving, and for which she was excelled by no lady of her time. She early became an authoress, and when twenty-two years of age appeared her first work, "Letters on the Works and Character of Rousseau;" which was highly eulogistic of that celebrated person. It was not till a year or two after Irving's interview with her that she published the work on which her literary reputation mainly rests. This was her "Corinne," a work having

some marked faults, yet full of elegant descriptions of the scenery, manners, and art of the classic land of Italy. This work was at once immensely popular, and was soon translated into all the European languages, and won for the fair authoress a wide-spread reputation.*

Mr. Irving now left Rome on his route to Paris, and reached that city after a journey occupying about six weeks. Here he continued four months; and from a few entries in his journal we may infer that while he professed to his brother a desire to profit by the literary and scientific advantages presented to him there, he was fully as earnest after lighter pur-

* Many other works came from the graceful and facile pen of Madame de Stael, and her fame and influence became very extensive. For a time she favored the French Revolution; but as it progressed, and more and more developed its cruel and bloody character, her womanly nature revolted against it. She was horror-struck at the murder of the King and Queen. As Napoleon arose into power she was his inveterate opposer. He attempted to gain her over to his cause; but failing, and dreading her influence, he banished her from France. During her exile she traveled over many of the countries of Europe, and her pen, meanwhile, was active. On the fall of Bonaparte she returned to Paris, and died there in 1817. She was twice married; first, to Baron de Stael Holstein, Swedish Minister to the French Court; and afterward, secretly, to M. de Rocca, a French officer. She was the mother of four children.

suits. The theater, opera, and the dance were amusements to which he was evidently much devoted. His journalistic pencilings grew increasingly meager and unsatisfactory, and finally ceased entirely; while the impressions of Paris upon his youthful and ardent mind seem to have been as vivid as they were fascinating and beautiful. For "pleasure and amusements" it was a place the most favorable and attractive in the world. Climate, theaters, operas, walks, "people, perfect liberty of private conduct," all were admirably adapted to pleasure and gayety. Ay, and admirably adapted too, we fear, to beguile young men away from correct principles, and from lives of respectability and virtue.

CHAPTER V.

AFTER four months' residence in Paris, where he had improved himself very considerably in his knowledge of the French language, and had become partially satiated with the endless round of amusements so bountifully afforded by that dissipated metropolis, Irving, in company with two American friends, departed for London. Their route lay through Brussels and Maestricht to Rotterdam, they pausing a day or two at each of these cities, and contemplating with deep interest the prodigious contrast between the Frenchman and the Hollander in appearance, houses, manners, language, and tastes.

From Rotterdam they came by packet to the mouth of the Thames, whence, by post-chaise, they passed up to London. Our traveler at once adapted his dress to his new situation, secured eligible and comfortably furnished lodgings partially retired from the bustle and confusion of the city, yet near many desirable

places of resort, among which the *theaters* are carefully included. Thus the theater is still prominent in the affections and plans of this youth, and his letters to one and another give full evidence of his absorbing interest in this class of amusements. He became deeply interested in the performers, their appearance, action, and general manners, entering into somewhat minute descriptions of them, and presenting various criticisms, and such as betray his devotion to theatrical amusements.

It was now that Irving saw and heard for the first time the famous Mrs. Siddons, one of the most distinguished actresses of that day. Here he is full and overflowing with enthusiasm. He fears to give expression to all his emotions. She is a wonderful woman. Her looks, voice, gestures, all go directly to his heart, which is frozen and melted by turns, and his frame is thrilled through and through, even with a single glance or gesture. He admires her the more the more he sees her; he hardly breathes when she is upon the stage, and she overwhelms him till he is a mere child.*

* Mrs. Siddons was of a distinguished family of actors. She was daughter of Roger Kemble, was born in Wales in 1755,

Mr. Irving seems to have made comparatively few acquaintances in London; and, having made a brief excursion to Oxford, Bath, and Bristol, he, after a sojourn of three months in the land of his forefathers, embarked at Gravesend for New York, where he arrived after an absence of twenty-two months. He returned home with restored health and in excellent spirits, and resumed, after his manner, the study of law.

From the picture of Washington Irving's life and habits about this time, as drawn by himself, he seems to have been a somewhat "fast young man," and, in association with several

and was bred to the stage. She was at eighteen years of age married to a young actor, Mr. Siddons, and for thirty years was queen of the stage. Irving's description of her power accords with all reports of her wonderful acting. "She appeared," says Hazlitt, "to belong to a superior order of beings — to be surrounded with a personal awe like some prophetess of old." "It was in bursts of indignation or grief, in sudden exclamations, in apostrophes and inarticulate sounds, that she raised the soul of passion to its height or sunk it in despair."

It is said that so complete was her stage abstraction that the very actors performing with her have been known to shrink with terror from her fierce disdain or withering scorn. She was greatly esteemed in all the relations of life. She died in London in 1831, at the age of seventy-six, the same age of Irving's decease.

other cheerful and jovial spirits, indulged himself now and then in gayeties and convivialities hardly consistent with a genuine circumspection and sobriety of conduct. In November following his return from Europe, and at twenty-three years of age, he was admitted to the bar, though sadly deficient in legal lore." But he seems never to have entered on the practice of the profession, and, within a month or two after his admission to the bar, he, in connection with his brother William and James K. Paulding, projected a periodical publication, to be entitled *Salmagundi*. This paper seems to have been issued once in two or three weeks, comprised twenty numbers, and continued to be issued through one year. Irving and Paulding appear to have shared about equally in the making up of the paper, the part of William Irving in the enterprise being somewhat subordinate. The writers appeared under fictitious names, and the compositions were characterized by wit, drollery, and satire, while the sensation among New York circles, produced by the several issues, was said to be intense, and its success was decided. Why it was so soon and suddenly discontinued, and the enterprise

abandoned, is not very apparent, while its early death seems not to have been in accordance with the wishes and plans of Irving. The work has, by able critics, been pronounced a production of more than ordinary merit, and one writer represents it as the literary parent not only of the Sketch Book and the Alhambra, but of all the intermediate and subsequent productions of Irving. Mr. Irving himself, however, failed to acquiesce in these and similar sentiments touching this literary effort of his youth, and in his maturer years valued himself but slightly for his share in it. "The work," he writes to a friend, "was pardonable as a juvenile production; but it is full of errors, puerilities, and imperfections, and I was in hopes it would gradually have gone down to oblivion."

CHAPTER VI.

BUT a specimen or two of *Salmagundi* we must endeavor to rescue from immediate "oblivion," if only to present a slight picture of Irving when his pen was wielded by him in the freshness of his youth.

"Anthony Green, Gent.," is one of Irving's assumed names in these compositions, and Anthony thus dresses up Will Wizard for attendance at a ball:

"On calling for Will in the evening I found him full dressed, waiting for me. I contemplated him with absolute dismay. As he still retained a spark of regard for the lady who once reigned in his affections, he had been at unusual pains in decorating his person, and broke upon my sight arrayed in the true style that prevailed among our beaux some years ago. His hair was turned up and tufted at the top, frizzled out at the ears, a profusion of powder puffed over the whole, and a long plaited club swung gracefully from shoulder to shoul-

der, describing a pleasing semicircle of powder and pomatum. His claret-colored coat was decorated with a profusion of gilt buttons, and reached to his calves. His white kerseymere small-clothes were so tight that he seemed to have grown up in them; and his ponderous legs, which are the thickest part of his body, were beautifully clothed in sky-blue silk stockings, once considered so becoming; but, above all, he prided himself upon his waistcoat of China silk, which might almost have served a good housewife for a short gown; and he boasted that the roses and tulips upon it were the work of Hang-Fou, daughter of the great Chin-Chin-Fou, who had fallen in love with the graces of his person, and sent it to him as a parting present."

"Will Wizard's" dancing is pictured thus: "The music struck up from an adjoining apartment, and summoned the company to the dance. The sound seemed to have an inspiring effect on honest Will, and he procured the hand of an old acquaintance for a country dance. It happened to be the fashionable one of "The Devil among the Tailors," which is so vociferously demanded at every ball and assembly;

and many a torn garment and many an unfortunate toe did rue the dancing of that night, for Will thundered down the dance like a coach and six, sometimes right, sometimes wrong; now running over half a score of little Frenchmen, and now making sad inroads into the ladies' cobweb muslins and spangled tails. As every part of Will's body partook of the exertion, he shook from his capacious head such volumes of powder that, like pious Æneas on the first interview of Queen Dido, he might be said to have been enveloped in a cloud. Nor was Will's partner an insignificant figure in the scene; she was a young lady of most voluminous proportions that quivered at every skip, and, being braced up in the fashionable style with whalebone, stay-tape, and buckram, looked like an apple-pudding tied in the middle; or, taking her flaming dress into consideration, like a bed and bolsters rolled up in a suit of red curtains."

We add one or two extracts from the description of "Charity Cockloft:"

"My Aunt Charity departed this life in the fifty-ninth year of her age, though she never grew older after twenty-five. In her teens she

was, according to her own account, a celebrated beauty, though I never could meet with any body that remembered when she was handsome. On the contrary, Evergreen's father, who used to gallant her in his youth, says she was as knotty a little piece of humanity as he ever saw; and that, if she had been possessed of the least sensibility, she would, like poor old *Acco*, have most certainly run mad at her own figure and face the first time she contemplated herself in a looking-glass.

"It is rather singular that my aunt, though a great beauty, and an heiress withal, never got married. The reason she alleged was that she never met with a lover who resembled Sir Charles Grandison, the hero of her nightly dreams and waking fancy; but I am privately of opinion that it was owing to her never having had an offer. This much is certain, that for many years previous to her decease she declined all attentions from the gentlemen, and contented herself with watching over the welfare of her fellow-creatures. She was, indeed, observed to take a considerable leaning toward Methodism, was frequent in her attendance at love-feasts, read Whitefield and Wesley, and even went so

far as once to travel the distance of five-and-twenty miles to be present at a camp-meeting. This gave great offense to my Cousin Christopher and his good lady, who, as I have already mentioned, are rigidly orthodox; and, had not my Aunt Charity been of a most pacific disposition, her religious whim-wham would have occasioned many a family altercation.

"But the truth must be told; with all her good qualities my Aunt Charity was afflicted with one fault, extremely rare among her gentle sex—it was curiosity. How she came by it I am at a loss to imagine; but it played the very vengeance with her, and destroyed the comfort of her life. Having an invincible desire to know everybody's character, business, and mode of living, she was forever prying into the affairs of her neighbors, and got a great deal of ill-will from people toward whom she had the kindest disposition possible. If any family on the opposite side of the street gave a dinner, my aunt would mount her spectacles and sit at the window until the company were all housed, merely that she might know who they were. If she heard a story about any of her

acquaintance she would forthwith set off full sail, and never rest until, to use her usual expression, she had got "to the bottom of it," which meant nothing more than telling it to every body she knew.

CHAPTER VII.

SHORTLY after the Salmagundi papers ceased to be issued, a literary work of greater pretensions, and destined to a far greater fame, began to employ the pen of Irving. The conception was that of a burlesque and humorous history of New York, and in the commencement of the composition his brother Peter was associated with him in the enterprise. Circumstances, however, rendering it inconvenient for his brother to continue his assistance, the entire preparation of the work devolved upon Washington, who brought it to a conclusion, and gave it to the publisher in the fall of 1809, and when its author was twenty-six years of age.

This remarkable book, like all the subsequent works of Irving, is too well known to need a word of remark or criticism here. A contemporaneous and able notice of the work pronounced it the wittiest that had ever been issued from the American press. Of course it was a

positive success, and its author at once became famous.

The "History" purported to be the work of a little dried up, quaint, and mysterious old gentleman—Diedrich Knickerbocker by name. He was dressed in an old shabby black coat and cocked hat, a pair of olive velvet breeches, with silver shoe-buckles, and was set down by his landlady as a country school-master. He had been a lodger, as it was further purported, at the "Columbian Hotel, Mulberry-street, New York," and, suddenly disappearing, had left behind him in his room, however, the manuscript of the famous "History," which was represented as being published to defray the expense of his hotel lodgings.

The work abounds in humor and drollery from beginning to end, and in this respect is excelled by few if any works of a similar character and aim that were ever published. Blackwood's Magazine, noticing the book several years after its first appearance, affirmed that the matter of the work would preserve its character of value long after the lapse of time had blunted the edge of the personal allusions, and that its author was "by far the greatest genius which had ap-

peared upon the literary horizon of the New World!" Edward Everett, in the North American Review, pronounced it "a book of unwearying pleasantry, which, instead of flashing out, as English and American humor is wont, from time to time, with long and dull intervals, is kept up with a true French vivacity from beginning to end." Sir Walter Scott, receiving a copy of the "History" from a friend of Irving, in acknowledging the present adds, among other things, "I have been employed these few evenings in reading it aloud to Mrs. Scott, and two other ladies who are guests, and our sides have been absolutely sore with laughing."

The style of the work is entirely characteristic, and differs little from that of the author's subsequent works. It is easy, simple, flowery, sparkling with vivacity, brilliant with imagery, and not sparing in classical and historical allusions, some of which are of a character that sets us wondering where and when this youth of twenty-six years, and partially "uneducated," could have acquired the learning with which he seems to have been so familiar. The various portraits of men and manners are, of course, of a burlesque and exaggerated character; while yet they are

valuable as affording us a glimpse, at least, of the social scenery of the good old times of the "Dutch Dynasty."

It is a curious and laughable fact that some of the old families of Dutch descent seem for a time to have taken this book in high dudgeon, being deeply incensed at the caricatures which it appeared to comprise of one and another of their venerated ancestors. So profound, in one instance, was this feeling, that Mr. Irving being at Albany soon after its publication, and receiving many attentions and civilities there, one lady, however, was of a very different bearing toward him and declared that if she were a man she would horsewhip him! Irving on hearing of this was greatly amused, and forthwith sought an introduction to the lady. She received him with great coldness; but before the interview ended she became entirely mollified, and the two were excellent friends.

Irving seems to have realized, subsequently, the delicate character of the ground he was traversing in this famous "History," and remarked to a friend that "it was a confounded impudent thing in such a youngster as I was to

be meddling in this way with old family names; but I did not dream of offense."

The truth seems to have been that in constructing his work the author rallied together indiscriminately all the old Dutch names that he had ever read or heard of, and invented a host of others besides that were new to every one, and wove them into his work without the slightest personal allusion in a single instance. He doubtless supposed that an antiquity of two centuries, equivalent to thrice that amount of time in old countries, would avail to place his several characters at a distance too remote for any criticism or blame connected with such a work as his, arising from any family pride of ancestry.

CHAPTER VIII.

WE devote a brief chapter to one or two extracts from the "History of New York." The following is a description of one of the Dutch Governors:

"The renowned Wouter (or Walter) Van Twiller was descended from a long line of Dutch burgomasters who had successively dozed away their lives and grown fat upon the bench of magistracy in Rotterdam, and who had comported themselves with such singular wisdom and propriety that they were never either heard or talked of; which, next to being universally applauded, should be the object of ambition of all magistrates and rulers. There are two opposite ways by which some men make a figure in the world: one, by talking faster than they think; and the other, by holding their tongues and not thinking at all. By the first, many a smatterer acquires the reputation of a man of quick parts; by the other, many a dunderpate, like the owl, the stupidest of birds, comes to be considered

the very type of wisdom. This, by the way, is a casual remark, which I would not for the universe have it thought I apply to Governor Van Twiller. It is true he was a man shut up within himself, like an oyster, and rarely spoke except in monosyllables; but then it was allowed he seldom said a foolish thing. So invincible was his gravity that he was never known to laugh, or even to smile, through the whole course of a long and prosperous life. Nay, if a joke were uttered in his presence that set light-minded hearers in a roar, it was observed to throw him into a state of perplexity. Sometimes he would deign to inquire into the matter and when, after much explanation, the joke was made as plain as a pike-staff, he would continue to smoke his pipe in silence, and at length, knocking out the ashes, would exclaim, 'Well! I see nothing in all that to laugh about.'

"With all his reflective habits he never made up his mind on a subject. His adherents accounted for this by the astonishing magnitude of his ideas. He conceived every subject on so grand a scale that he had not room in his head to turn it over and examine both sides of it. Certain it is that if any matters were propounded

to him on which ordinary mortals would rashly determine at first glance, he would put on a vague, mysterious look, shake his capacious head, smoke some time in profound silence, and at length observe that 'he had his doubts about the matter;' which gained him the reputation of a man slow of belief and not easily imposed upon. What is more, it gained him a lasting name; for to this habit of the mind has been attributed his surname of Twiller, which is said to be a corruption of the original Twijffler, or, in plain English, *Doubter*.

"The person of this illustrious old gentleman was formed and proportioned as though it had been molded by the hands of some cunning Dutch statuary as a model of majesty and lordly grandeur. He was exactly five feet six inches in height, and six feet five inches in circumference. His head was a perfect sphere, and of such stupendous dimensions that Dame Nature with all her sex's ingenuity, would have been puzzled to construct a neck capable of supporting it; wherefore she wisely declined the attempt, and settled it firmly on the top of his back bone, just between the shoulders. His body was oblong, and particularly capacious at

bottom, which was wisely ordered by Providence, seeing that he was a man of sedentary habits, and very averse to the idle labor of walking. His legs were short, but sturdy in proportion to the weight they had to sustain; so that when erect he had not a little the appearance of a beer barrel on skids. His face, that infallible index of the mind, presented a vast expanse, unfurrowed by any of those lines and angles which disfigure the human countenance with what is termed expression. Two small gray eyes twinkled feebly in the midst, like two stars of lesser magnitude in a hazy firmament; and his full-fed cheeks, which seemed to have taken toll of every thing that went into his mouth, were curiously mottled and streaked with dusky red, like a Spitzenberg apple."

The successor of Walter the Doubter is thus described:

"Wilhelmus Kieft, who, in 1634, ascended the gubernatorial chair, was of a lofty descent, his father being inspector of wind-mills in the ancient town of Saardam; and our hero, we are told, when a boy, made very curious investigations into the nature and operations of these machines, which was one reason why he came

to be Governor. His name, according to the most authentic etymologists, was a corruption of kyver, that is to say, a *wrangler* or *scolder*, and expressed the characteristic of his family, which for nearly two centuries had kept the windy town of Saardam in hot water, and produced more tartars and brimstones than any ten families in the place; and so truly did he inherit this family peculiarity that he had not been a year in the government of the province before he was universally denominated William the Testy. His appearance answered to his name. He was a brisk, wiry, waspish little old gentleman; such a one as may now and then be seen stamping about our city in a broad-skirted coat with huge buttons, a cocked hat stuck on the back of his head, and a cane as high as his chin. His face was broad, but his features were sharp; his cheeks were scorched into a dusky red by two fiery little gray eyes; his nose turned up, and the corners of his mouth turned down, pretty much like the muzzle of an irritable dog."

The well-dressed lady of the golden age of the Dutch dynasty is thus presented:

"A fine lady in those times waddled under more clothes, even on a fair summer's day, than

would have clad the whole bevy of a modern ball-room. Nor were they the less admired by the gentlemen in consequence thereof. On the contrary, the greatness of a lover's passion seemed to increase in proportion to the magnitude of its object; and a voluminous damsel, arrayed in a dozen of petticoats, was declared by a Low Dutch sonneteer of the province to be radiant as a sun-flower, and luxuriant as a full-blown cabbage. Certain it is that in those days the heart of a lover could not contain more than one lady at a time; whereas the heart of a modern gallant has often room enough to accommodate half a dozen. The reason of which I conclude to be, that either the hearts of the gentlemen have grown larger, or the persons of the ladies smaller; this, however, is a question for physiologists to determine."

The "truly fashionable gentleman" of those days is presented as follows:

"His dress, which served for both morning and evening, street and drawing-room, was a linsey-woolsey coat, made perhaps by the fair hands of the mistress of his affections, and gallantly bedecked with abundance of large brass buttons; half a score of breeches heightened the

proportions of his figure; his shoes were decorated by enormous copper buckles; a low-crowned, broad-rimmed hat overshadowed his burly visage, and his hair dangled down his back in a prodigious queue of eel-skin.

"Thus equipped, he would manfully sally forth with pipe in mouth to besiege some fair damsel's obdurate heart—not such a pipe, good reader, as that which Acis did sweetly tune in praise of his Galatæa, but one of true Delft manufacture, and furnished with a charge of fragrant tobacco. With this he would resolutely set himself down before the fortress, and rarely failed, in the process of time, to smoke the fair enemy into surrender."

We have the following picture of the Puritan New Englanders, a "horde of strange barbarians bordering upon the eastern frontier."

"Now it so came to pass that many years previous to the time of which we are treating the sage cabinet of England had adopted a certain national creed, a kind of public walk of faith, or rather a religious turnpike, in which every loyal subject was directed to travel to Zion, taking care to pay the *toll-gatherers* by the way.

"Albeit a certain shrewd race of men, being very much given to indulge their own opinions on all manner of subjects, (a propensity exceedingly offensive to your governments of Europe,) did most presumptuously dare to think for themselves in matters of religion, exercising what they considered a natural and unextinguishable right, the liberty of conscience.

"As, however, they possessed that ingenuous habit of mind which always thinks aloud, which rides cock-a-hoop on the tongue and is forever galloping into other people's ears, it naturally followed that their liberty of conscience likewise implied *liberty of speech*, which, being freely indulged, soon put the country in a hubbub, and aroused the pious indignation of the vigilant fathers of the Church.

"The usual methods were adopted to reclaim them which, in those days, were considered efficacious in bringing back stray sheep to the fold; that is to say, they were coaxed, they were admonished, they were menaced, they were buffeted—line upon line, precept upon precept, lash upon lash, here a little, there a great deal—were exhorted without mercy, and without success—until the worthy Pastors of

the Church, wearied out by their unparalleled stubbornness, were driven, in the excess of their tender mercy, to adopt the Scripture text, and literally to heap live embers on their heads.

"Nothing, however, could subdue that independence of the tongue which has ever distinguished this singular race, so that, rather than subject that heroic member to further tyranny, they one and all embarked for the wilderness of America to enjoy unmolested the inestimable right of talking; and, in fact, no sooner did they land upon the shore of this free-spoken country than they all lifted up their voices and made such a clamor of tongues that we are told they frightened every bird and beast out of the neighborhood, and struck such mute terror into certain fish that they have been called *dumb-fish* ever since.

"This may appear marvelous, but it is nevertheless true; in proof of which I would observe that the *dumb-fish* has ever since become an object of superstitious reverence, and forms the Saturday's dinner of every true Yankee.

"The simple aborigines of the land for a while looked upon these strange folk in utter

astonishment, but discovering that they wielded harmless though noisy weapons, and were a lively, ingenious, good-humored race of men, they became very friendly and sociable, and gave them the name of *Yanokies*, which in the Mais-Tchusaeg (or Massachusetts) language signifies *silent men*, a waggish appellation, since shortened into the familiar epithet of *Yankees*, which they retain unto the present day."

CHAPTER IX.

IT may appear remarkable that so decided a literary and financial success as the "History of New York," joined with the fact of the author's youth, should not have immediately stimulated him to renewed and active enterprise in authorship.

One secret of all this was a seemingly curious blending in his nature of sprightliness and activity with a species of careless indolence. He belonged not to that class of writers who, in the language of Dr. Johnson, "set themselves *doggedly*" to the use of the pen. He was more a creature of impulse, of "frames and feelings." He had a horror of being *obliged* to use his pen. He coveted to write as a man of leisure, and dreaded the idea of dependence upon authorship for a livelihood. He loved to write under a sort of inspiration; he hated composition as a task. But there was another, and probably a deeper, reason for the pause of

his pen as the final page of the "History" was written.

It is well known that Washington Irving lived and died a *bachelor*. But, to use an expression of his own, he "was never intended for" such a life; and with this sentiment, so frankly avowed by himself, all who have familiarized themselves with the man through his writings will be inclined to acquiesce. It would be judged through this medium that no one was more fitted for the duties and happiness of domestic life than he. His respect and esteem for the fair sex were sincere and profound; and it is easy to see that he was with ladies a universal favorite. Handsome in form and in feature, of warm and genial temperament, naturally graceful in movement and manners, eminently social, and possessing conversational powers as remarkable as they were animated and fascinating, with fine intellectual faculties and accomplishments, with an acknowledged genius in authorship even in his youth, and challenging for himself a reputation for uprightness and virtue without a blemish, it could not be otherwise than that this refined young gentleman would be an object of interest

and attraction in the eyes of more than one of the elegant ladies with whom it was his life-long habit to associate.

One of these, indeed, he loved, and was beloved in return. Precisely how long this mutual attachment had existed does not appear; but it was an established fact about the time of the completion of the Knickerbocker history. The young lady, *Matilda Hoffman*, was a daughter of the gentleman in whose office Irving had pursued his law studies, and the plans and hopes of the young couple seem to have met the approval of their respective family circles.

But in the midst of all their bright hopes and anticipations Matilda Hoffman sickened and died, in her eighteenth year, and left her lover broken-hearted, and "the dearest hope of his life was forever overthrown." So unspeakable and profound was his sorrow that he almost never spoke of it, nor spoke nor alluded to the precious name of his lost Matilda. Nor from all his voluminous writings could it be gathered that such an attachment had ever existed; and many a one that saw and knew the man only in his writings has felt that he was, indeed, "not intended for a bachelor," and wondered

that his genial and apparently sunny life thus glided away in solitude. But we know not his whole heart, nor discern the beautiful image that was early buried there, and which no subsequent vision of loveliness and goodness could ever displace.

Under such circumstances how increasingly admirable appear the life and career of Irving! Thousands under a similar adversity have drooped and fainted, and all the sunshine of their life was lost in cold and dire eclipse, and they never took hold of strength more, and thus were numbered among the lost lives. Not so with the subject of this story. He mourned deeply — mourned, perchance, through all his affluence of humor, blithesomeness, and gayety, and, for aught we know, his inmost heart was bleeding even when penning some one of his most cheery and enlivening sentiments. It may have been amid the "shadow of death" that he dispensed for the delight of thousands some of the sunniest and most sparkling and sprightly pictures; and that half century of years from his Matilda's death to his own were, doubtless, lonely years—too lonely that any spirit of earth, however lovely, beautiful, and good, should ever

come to supply the fatal want, and, by her gentle touch, heal up the life-long wound. In his private record he writes, long after her decease, "She died in the beauty of her youth, and in my memory she will ever be young and beautiful!"

The early and dreadful shock thus received by Washington Irving, about the time of issuing his "History of New York," doubtless had its stunning and staggering influence. A great amazement came over him; a "shadow of great darkness" fell upon him a calamity such as has overwhelmed and destroyed many a strong man confounded him; and no wonder that his facile and beautiful pen dropped from his palsied hand, and that life henceforth became a different thing from what it had been before.

Happy for himself and millions more that he rallied, that his head was uplifted amid the storm, and that, in the whirlwind and the blasting and overthrow, a soft voice of music yet whispered to him, *Write!* But one and another untoward circumstance intervened, and it was long ere that "still, small voice" prevailed.

CHAPTER X.

SHORTLY after the publication of the "Knickerbocker History," Mr. Irving, at the solicitation of his two brothers, Peter and Ebenezer, entered into a kind of silent partnership with them, with the understanding that they were to be the active agents in the concern, while he, being thus provided with the means of subsistence, would be at liberty to engage, without distraction or care, in literary pursuits.

During much time, however, he seems to have made little or no literary exertion, but gave himself up with a sort of *abandon* to social enjoyments. The winter following his business arrangement with his brothers certain interests of the company seemed to render it necessary that he should visit Washington. Here he remained till the close of the session in March, giving apparently but slight attention to business affairs, but devoting himself without reserve to the festivities and gayeties of the

capital. His letters tell of "time passing delightfully;" of dinings, balls, dances, levees, interesting men, fine women, and the like. Then for two years after this he is comparatively idle, though favored with a situation the most auspicious for writing, and he is "settled down into a sort of gentleman of leisure—not neglectful of mental cultivation, it is true, yet mainly intent upon the pleasures and amusements of the passing hour."

For a year or two, however, subsequent to this unfruitful interval of his life, Mr. Irving was induced to assume editorial charge of a monthly periodical entitled "Select Reviews," and published in Philadelphia. Its name was subsequently changed to "Analectic Review;" and, during Irving's superintendency of the periodical, it was enriched with a goodly number of his contributions, comprising reviews and biographical sketches. The employment, however, was not to his taste, the necessity of periodical writing being inconsistent with that perfect freedom, as to times and themes of composition, which he always so much coveted, and which seemed so necessary to a full and free exercise of his genius.

In May, 1815, Mr. Irving embarked the second time for Europe, and arrived at Liverpool amid the rejoicings over the splendid victory of Waterloo. He expresses in a letter his regret at the hard fate of Napoleon, and thinks it "a thousand pities he had not fallen like a hero" in the great battle.

At Liverpool he salutes, after seven years of separation, his brother Peter, who was acting as foreign partner in the company whose formation has been already noticed. "I found him," writes Washington to his brother Ebenezer, the home partner, "very comfortably situated, having handsomely furnished rooms, and keeping a horse, gig, and servant, but not indulging in any extravagance or dash." After a week's visit with Peter, he visits, at Birmingham, his sister, Mrs. Van Wart, who, together with her husband and children, were residing there, and whom he finds "in excellent health and spirits, and most delightfully situated in the vicinity of the town." He afterward goes on an excursion to Sydenham, with a view to visit the poet Campbell. Not finding him at home, he spends an hour, however, in conversation with Mrs. Campbell, "a most engaging and interesting woman."

Afterward he visits Kenilworth, Warwick, and Stratford-on-Avon, and views other interesting localities.

Returning to Liverpool, the affairs of the company, by reason of a protracted illness of his brother, require his attention and assistance; and, though averse to business, he for several months gives unremitting attention to the interests of the firm. Emerging at length from "the mud of Liverpool," and the "sordid cares of the counting-house," he revisits his sister at Birmingham, where he finds his brother Peter enfeebled and helpless by sickness. Owing to excessive purchases, and the failure, through adverse winds, of their goods to reach New York in season, the affairs of the company became straitened and miserably depressed. Nor was there a mere temporary depression, but it seems to have been protracted and discouraging, while its influence upon Irving's mind was such as to incapacitate him for writing, or for accomplishing for a time any of those favorite plans that had led him a second time over sea. Arriving in England in the summer of 1815, during the remainder of that year and the whole of the year following he

found himself entangled with the affairs of the company, now in a state of comparative embarrassment. Yet these clouds of partial adversity seem to have been not without their chastening and salutary influence upon a mind whose hopes and anticipations were, perhaps, too buoyant and confiding. As the year 1816 drew toward its close we notice dripping from his pen such sentiments as these:

"My own individual interests are nothing. The merest pittance would content me if I could crawl out from among these troubles and see my connections safe around me." This beautiful fraternal interest and affection seems to have been one of Irving's prominent characteristics, and in no department of his distinguished character does he appear to greater advantage.

In the same connection he writes again: "It is not long since I felt myself quite sure of fortune's smiles, and began to entertain what I thought very sober and rational schemes for my future comfort and establishment. At present I feel so tempest-tossed and weather-beaten that I shall be content to be quits with fortune for a very moderate portion, and give up all my sober schemes as the dreams of fairy-

land." Again, alluding to the blessings of "fortune," he adds: "I think I can enjoy them as well as most men. I shall not make myself unhappy if she (fortune) chooses to be scanty, and shall take the position allotted me with a cheerful and contented mind."

If for *fortune* in these extracts we substitute a more Christian term, all appears sensible and well. It may be that Irving's mind was upon the Divine Providence in penning these sentiments; but if so, why does he not write as he means? Why, alas! will multitudes, in their language, recognize the gods of the heathen, which are no gods, instead of acknowledging that Divine Hand which is ever holding us up, and which is ever ready to lead us, if we will, along peaceful and prosperous paths? He who talks of "fortune," "smiles of fortune," and "fortune showering blessings," and assigns to "fortune" sex, and superintendence over human affairs—such a man talks arrant heathenism; and, so far as his language is concerned, goes out from the light into outer darkness, and affiliates and grovels with the veriest pagans. If it be replied that such talkers and writers *mean* what is correct, then we ask again, Why

not *say* what they mean? What is the necessity of resorting to heathenism for terms which, in themselves, are worse than nothing, when Christian language comprises an abundance of terms having the true meaning? And who is so devoid of all sound philosophy as not to know that language deeply affects the mind and the belief. He who adopts a heathen terminology in reference to spiritual things is, ten to one, already more than half a heathen in his actual notions. Instead of drawing near to the true God, he is inhaling a Pagan atmosphere and stumbling on the dark mountains. "Commit thy ways unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be established."

Bankruptcy soon ensued with the three brothers, which, though deeply afflictive to Washington, yet his distress was evidently more for his brothers than for himself. He seems glad to be rid, at almost any rate, of the business burdens which had for so long a time pressed heavily upon him. "I am eager," he writes, "to get from under this murky cloud before it completely withers and blights me. . . . A much longer continuance of such a situation would be my ruin."

But a blessing comes with the calamity, for under its influence he is drawn to a better faith, or, at least, to a better theology. "I trust in a kind Providence that shapes all things for the best, and yet I hope to find future good springing out of these present adversities."

Well said. You are right, young man, and according to your faith and hope it shall be done unto you.

CHAPTER XI.

THUS Washington Irving at thirty-four years of age is a bankrupt. In this "low estate" he receives a remarkable letter from Mr. James Ogilvie,* dated at London, and of which the following is an extract:

"So far as you are individually concerned I should deem the language of condolence a sort of mockery. I am perfectly confident that even in two years you will look back on this seeming disaster as the most fortunate incident that has

* *Mr. Ogilvie* was a Scotchman of noble descent, and was, at the time of writing this letter, approaching sixty years of age. He had long before emigrated to this country, and, becoming embarrassed, he founded a classical school at Richmond, Va., and many of his pupils became celebrated, among whom were such names as General Scott, Commodore Jones, W. S. Archer, and others. After several years he went to the backwoods of Kentucky, dwelt alone in a log-cabin, and composed there a series of deeply interesting lectures, which he delivered with great applause throughout the Atlantic States. His fame reached England, and, returning to Scotland, he on his way lectured in London, but with less success. The habitual use of narcotics ruined his intellect, and he is said to have perished by suicide in 1820, about three years after penning his prophetic epistle to Irving.

befallen you. Yet in the flower of youth, in possession of higher literary reputation than any of your countrymen have hitherto claimed, esteemed and beloved by all to whom you are intimately, or even casually, known, you want nothing but a stimulus strong enough to overcome that indolence which, in a greater or less degree, besets every human being. This seemingly unfortunate incident will supply this stimulus—you will return with renovated ardor to the arena you have for a season abandoned, and in twelve months win trophies for which, but for this incident, you would not even have contended."

It is pleasant to notice that the discouraging state of his affairs did not prevent Mr. Irving from an excursion, about this time, into Scotland, and from much enjoyment with friends and scenery that greeted him there.

He first visited Edinburgh, and was enchanted with the general appearance of the city. It far surpassed all his expectations, and, with the exception of Naples, seemed to him the most picturesque place he had ever seen. The famous Rock and Castle presented new aspects of beauty as often as he viewed them. "Ar-

thur's Seat" was a perfect witchcraft. He rambled about the bridges and on Calton Hill in "a perfect intoxication of mind." The public buildings he seems to have overlooked entirely. He was utterly absorbed in the romantic features of the scenery around him, so that a single day's enjoyment from this source was a sufficient compensation for his whole journey.

His visit to Walter Scott* seemed mutually

* *Sir Walter Scott* was a native of Edinburgh, born in 1771, and was allied to the border family of Scotts. He was a delicate child, but grew firmer in health as he approached his tenth year, although a partial lameness began with his second year and never left him. He was educated at the High School and University of Edinburgh, in neither of which was he distinguished as a scholar. He was, however, a prodigious reader of romances, old plays, poetry, travels, and every kind of miscellaneous literature on which he could lay hands. It was thus that his literary tastes and character were shaped. He was an ardent lover of natural scenery, and his romantic feelings, begotten by the peculiar character of his reading, associated themselves with the various grand features of the landscape scenery around him.

He was at fifteen apprenticed to the law in the office of his father, and, after the study of six years—perusing literature largely meanwhile—he was admitted to the Scottish Bar. He now soon began to write and print, and for about a score of years his pen was mainly directed to poetic compositions. About the end of this time, however, his poetic genius seems to have waned, and his popularity in this department of literature sensibly declined, while at the same time the efful-

and immensely gratifying. The scenery of Abbotsford and the surroundings charmed him

gence of Byron's rising glory began to blaze forth with dazzling brilliancy.

From this time Scott seems to have assumed a "new point of departure," and he determined to seek literary fame in another path than poetry. Nine or ten years before he had commenced a novel designed to illustrate Highland scenery and customs in the middle of the last century, and the sheets seem to have been mislaid and forgotten. These, providentially, now came to light, and Scott seized upon the work, and in three weeks finished the second and third volumes, and put it immediately to press anonymously, and under the title of "Waverley." It proved a great success, and was the commencement of that wonderful series of novels bearing the same name—appearing in rapid succession for a term of years from 1815—the author meanwhile prosecuting besides various other literary works. By the avails of his labors he had gradually built up for himself an ample and beautiful domain on the banks of the Tweed, to which he gave the name of Abbotsford, which became one of the most famous of literary shrines, and where he was accustomed to dispense a generous hospitality. Here it was that Irving visited him, as above described, and was so greatly delighted with the man, the family, the surroundings, and every thing.

A few years afterward, however, a great financial reverse came upon Scott, and by certain business connections with two Edinburgh publishers he, by their failure, became involved in an enormous debt of $750,000! This, it would seem, would have appalled any man but Scott. He, however, having procured an extension, seized his pen, and, at fifty-five years of age, launched away upon a new series of literary labors astonishing even to contemplate. Suffice it to say that, by his wonderful industry and herculean efforts, he, in about half a dozen years, paid $500,000 of his debt, and by disposing of the copyrights of some of his works canceled the remain-

into "a kind of dream or delirium." Leaving this paradise, he never departed from any place with more regret, and the few days he passed there were "among the most delightful of his life, and worth as many years of ordinary existence." So, also, he was charmed with the Scott family. The wife and mother, the sons and daughters, all impressed the visitor with extraordinary interest, while of Scott himself nothing but Irving's own words will do. "As to Scott himself, I cannot express my delight at his character and manners. He is a sterling, golden-hearted old worthy, 'full of the joyousness of youth,' with an imagination continually furnishing forth pictures, and a charming simplicity of manner that puts you at ease with him in a moment. It has been a constant source of pleasure to me to remark his deportment toward his family, his neighbors, his very dogs and cats; every thing that comes within his influence seems to catch a beam of that sunshine that plays round his heart. . . . It is a

der. It was a most astonishing achievement, but it killed him. Mental exhaustion came on, of course. His brain was overstrained, general health declined, gradual paralysis ensued, and in 1832—that year so famous for distinguished deaths—Walter Scott expired. He was made baronet in 1820.

perfect picture to see Scott and his household assembled of an evening—the dogs stretched before the fire, the cat perched on a chair, Mrs. Scott and the girls sewing, and Scott either reading out of some old romance, or telling border stories.

Per Contra.—Just after receiving this visit from Irving, Scott writes thus to a friend: "When you see Tom Campbell, tell him, with my best love, that I have to thank him for making me known to Mr. Washington Irving, who is one of the best and pleasantest acquaintances I have made this many a day."

Meanwhile other delightful friends saluted the visitor to Scotland. Jeffrey * was extremely

* *Francis Jeffrey* was a native of Edinburgh, and was educated at Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Oxford. He was always near the head of his class, and is said to have never lost his class position without weeping. At Glasgow he excelled as a speaker and debater, and formed the important habit which all students should consider well, of systematically accompanying all his studies by collateral composition.

His residence at Oxford was far from agreeable to him, where he declared that he saw nothing to acquire except "drinking and praying." He soon left, and attended the law class at Edinburgh University, at the same time busying himself with literature, and was a member of the "Speculative Society," a famous debating club, comprising names afterward celebrated in history. He was admitted to the bar in 1794, but suffered, for a time, as a lawyer, by his ardent pursuit of

friendly and agreeable. At his table Irving met the wife and daughter of Dugald Stewart,* also

literature, to which he was as much devoted as to his profession. He, in connection with Brougham, Sidney Smith, and Horner, planned the Edinburgh Review, whose first number appeared in 1802, with Jeffrey as editor. This periodical became rapidly popular, and Jeffrey continued its editor for twenty-six years, during all of which time he was its most popular contributor, and the whole number of his contributions amounted to two hundred. He was among the most famous of critics, pointing out the beauties and defects of compositions under his examination with wonderful thoroughness and masterly ability. The freedom of his strictures was greatly offensive to many of the distinguished writers of his time, and such authors as Moore, Wordsworth, Southey, Coleridge, and others were among those who were compelled to writhe under the edge of his terrible scalpel. Moore once challenged him to mortal combat; and so enraged with him was Wordsworth that he classed him with Robespierre and Bonaparte, denouncing them as the three most formidable enemies of mankind that had appeared within his memory. At the same time his criticism of authors seems to have been as fully alive to their beauties and excellence as to their defects, while the former were very generally selected for quotation.

Jeffrey married, as his second wife, Miss Charlotte Wilkes, a New York lady, and at the time of Irving's visit, as described in the preceding chapter, was forty-four years old, and in the full ripeness of his powers. His reputation as a lawyer increased with his success as a reviewer, and he rose to the highest eminence of an advocate. He became successively Rector of Glasgow University, Dean of the Faculty of Advocates, Law Advocate, Member of Parliament, and Judge upon the Scottish Bench. He died in 1850.

* *Dugald Stewart* was also a native of Edinburgh, born in 1753, and was educated at the High School and University of his native city, but heard the lectures of Reid at Glasgow for

Lady Davy, wife of Sir Humphrey,* who "talked like an angel," and whose colloquial excellence

a single term. At twenty-one he was chosen Mathematical Professor at Edinburgh, and on the resignation of the Chair of Moral Philosophy by Professor Ferguson he was elected his successor, holding the office during twenty-four years, and enjoying the highest reputation as a lecturer. The most competent authorities, as Mackintosh, Cockburn, Mill, and others, pronounced him one of the most accomplished didactic orators of modern times, whose eloquence in his lectures, says the latter, far surpassed Pitt and Fox in their most admired speeches.

In 1792 Stewart published the first volume of "Elements of Philosophy of the Mind," and the next year his "Outlines of Moral Philosophy." In 1796 followed the Biography of Dr. Robertson, and in 1802 that of Dr. Reid. In 1810 appeared his "Philosophical Essays." Retiring from his professorship, he published several other important works, among which was his "Philosophy of the Active and Moral Powers," which was completed just before his death in 1828.

* *Sir Humphrey Davy* was a native of Cornwall, and was born in 1778. He was not remarkable as a boy, yet stood well in his studies, had a taste for fishing and hunting, which he never lost, and finished his school education at fifteen, when his process of self-education commenced. He at sixteen was apprenticed to a physician, and commenced studying with great zeal, giving attention not only to medicine, but to linguistic, mathematical, and metaphysical studies, and especially to chemistry and physics, not neglecting poetry and fiction; and on all his subjects of study he read the best authorities within his reach. In his nineteenth year his attention was first strongly turned to chemistry; and reading of Lavoisier "first led him to the experimental study of the science in which he was destined to work such remarkable changes." At the age of twenty-four he was appointed Professor of Chemistry in the Royal Institute established at London, where

attracted all ears, as the "minster-bird" drew to the surrounding trees and branches all

"his lectures at once became exceedingly popular; his youth, simple manners, eloquence, his knowledge of his subject, and his brilliant experiments, excited the attention of the highest ranks in London; his society was coveted by all, and he seemed in danger of becoming a votary of fashion rather than of science." He continued here eleven and a half years, devoting all his time and energies to lecturing and to experimental studies, in which his enthusiasm and the excitement of his discoveries threw him into a fever and nearly finished his life. Rallying, however, his experiments and discoveries went on hand in hand, and his reputation as a lecturer arose with his success, and became such that he was invited to lecture in different cities, received the degree of Doctor of Civil Law at Trinity College, Dublin, and in April, 1812, was knighted. In the same month he was married to Mrs. Apreece, a lady of accomplishments and considerable fortune, and who was the lady that so astonished Irving by her colloquial powers. Sir Humphrey afterward traveled extensively on the Continent, still pursuing, however, his chemical researches. In 1812 a terrific explosion having occurred in a coal mine, by which a hundred men were killed, Davy was solicited to devise, if possible, some contrivance for preventing such destructive calamities. Hence resulted, in the course of a few months, the famous "safety-lamp," an invention which has elevated Davy to be one of the benefactors of mankind. On its being suggested to him that he should avail himself of a patent for this invention, he responded in these noble words: "No, my good friend, I never thought of such a thing; my sole object was to serve the cause of humanity, and if I have succeeded, I am amply rewarded in the gratifying reflection of having done so."

Davy was, by universal consent, considered without a superior, if he had an equal, among the chemists of his time. He died at Geneva, June 1st, 1829.

the birds of the forest in listening attitudes. His excursion in the Highlands was one of the most delightful he ever made: weather warm, genial, serene, and sunshiny; traveling by chaise, coach, gig, boat, cart, and on foot; scenery some of the most remarkable and beautiful in Scotland.

CHAPTER XII.

THUS, after three tedious years in England, during which the mercantile prospects of the three brothers went down in bankruptcy, Washington Irving, emancipated now from the thraldom of business, with which he was constitutionally unfit to grapple, again resumed his pen, and resumed it as his reliance for further support and independence.

Through the agency of his eldest brother, William, who was at this time a member of Congress, an eligible place had been secured for Washington in the Navy Board, with a salary equal to $2,400. It was an office whose duties would be light, and which would afford ample leisure for literary pursuits. To the great disappointment of William, however, his brother declined this fine opening, assigning as a principal reason that he did not wish to undertake any situation that must involve him in such a routine of duties as to prevent him from literary pursuits. In a letter to his brother Ebenezer,

he presents, somewhat at large, his feelings, views, and notions relating to the important position which he had assumed, and which, when connected with the magnificent results following his decision, challenges for itself a more than ordinary interest. In this letter he submits that the situation at Washington would but barely sustain him genteelly; that it could lead to nothing higher except politically, and for political life his talents, habits, and taste were not adapted; that he could not, at the same time discharge the duties of the office and pursue his favorite plan of literary studies, and that if he were ever to gain any solid reputation with the public it must be "in the quiet and assiduous operations of his pen." He was now thirty-five years of age; and he adds in this letter to his brother that he had already suffered several precious years of youth and lively imagination to pass by unimproved, and that it behooved him to make the most of what was left; that this was the very period of his life most auspicious for securing a literary reputation, and if he should succeed in this it would repay him for a world of care and privation to be placed among the established authors of his

country, and to win the affections of his countrymen.

Thus it happily came to pass that Irving declined office, and struck out a path for himself; and the sequel amply demonstrated the correctness and wisdom of his decision.

At the time of penning the important letter above noticed, Mr. Irving was just about putting to press the first number of the "Sketch Book." Its first publication was in this country; and it was issued in successive numbers, and from time to time, until completed. It was afterward issued in London, under the auspices of the author; and it was, in both countries, at once exceedingly popular, highly approved both by American and English critics, and greatly advanced, on both sides of the water, the reputation of its author.

The work comprises a series of sketches, from thirty to forty in number, some of them quite brief, others expanded into much greater length, and presenting a very considerable variety of topics. Authors, scenery, customs, localities, stories, etc., come into the scope of the work—some of the sketches dwelling upon American scenery and personages, but most of them occu-

pied with English subjects, over which the author seems to linger with more than ordinary partiality. The series is marked by a pleasant variety, not only in respect to the character of the themes, but the temperament, so to speak, with which they are treated. There will be found the sobriety of history and narrative, the pathos belonging to unaffected sympathy with sorrow, and, on the other hand, the humor by which his genius seemed so strongly characterized.

The style of the sketches is every-where his own—pure, chaste, easy, flowing; often elegant, and always appropriate to the theme in hand; rich, yet not extravagant with varied and pertinent imagery—pleasant flowers of speech intermingling themselves with his graceful and facile style, presenting themselves not in gorgeous superabundance as in some artificial garden of beauty, but constantly occurring in a sort of natural order and variety, like the floral adornments that greet us as we glance along some cultivated and beautiful landscape.

A brief extract or two from these admirable sketches may not be without use in setting forth some of the more prominent peculiarities of Mr. Irving's spirit and style of composition.

CHAPTER XIII.

IN his Sketch of Mr. Roscoe, of Liverpool, comparing him with other English writers of distinction, Mr. Irving writes:

"Mr. Roscoe has claimed none of the accorded privileges of talent. He has shut himself up in no garden of thought nor elysium of fancy, but has gone forth into the highways and thoroughfares of life; he has planted bowers by the way-side for the refreshment of the pilgrim and the sojourner, and has opened pure fountains, where the laboring man may turn aside from the dust and heat of the day, and drink of the living streams of knowledge. There is a 'daily beauty in his life' on which mankind may meditate and grow better. It exhibits no lofty, and almost useless, because inimitable, example of excellence, but presents a picture of active, yet simple and imitable virtues, which are within every man's reach, but which, unfortunately, are not exercised by many, or this world would be a paradise. . . .

"He has shown how much may be done

for a place in hours of leisure by one master spirit, and how completely it can give its own impress to surrounding objects. Like his own 'Lorenzo de Medici,' on whom he seems to have fixed his eye as on a pure model of antiquity, he has interwoven the history of his life with the history of his native town, and has made the foundations of its fame the monuments of his virtues. Wherever you go in Liverpool you perceive traces of his footsteps in all that is elegant and liberal. He found the tide of wealth flowing merely in the channels of traffic; he has diverted from it invigorating rills to refresh the gardens of literature. By his own example and constant exertion, he has effected that union of commerce and the intellectual pursuits so eloquently recommended in one of his latest writings, and has practically proved how beautifully they may be brought to harmonize, and to benefit each other."

We have the following touching the "Royal Poet," James of Scotland—an extract closing with a passage whose splendid imagery, brilliant words, harmonious and graceful construction, and musical movement, are hardly surpassed in the English language:

"James flourished nearly about the time of Chaucer and Gower, and was evidently an admirer and studier of their writings. Indeed, in one of his stanzas he acknowledges them as his masters; and in some parts of his poem we find traces of similarity to their productions, more especially to those of Chaucer. There are always, however, general features of resemblance in the works of contemporary authors which are not so much borrowed from each other as from the times. Writers, like bees, toll their sweets in the wide world; they incorporate with their own conceptions the anecdotes and thoughts current in society; and thus each generation has some features in common characteristic of the age in which it lived.

"James belongs to one of the most brilliant eras of our literary history, and establishes the claims of his country to a participation in its primitive honors. Whilst a small cluster of English writers are constantly cited as the fathers of our verse, the name of their great Scottish compeer is apt to be passed over in silence; but he is evidently worthy of being enrolled in that little constellation of remote but never-failing luminaries who shine in the high-

est firmament of literature, and who, like the morning stars, sang together at the bright dawning of British poesy."

The author is moving pensively amid the somber scenery of Westminster Abbey. Let us glance at a picture or two:

"While wandering about these gloomy vaults and silent aisles, studying the records of the dead, the sound of busy existence from without occasionally reaches the ear—the rumbling of the passing equipage, the murmur of the multitude, or, perhaps, the light laugh of pleasure. The contrast is striking with the death-like repose around; and it has a strange effect upon the feelings thus to hear the surges of active life hurrying along and beating against the very walls of the sepulcher. . . .

"Two small aisles on each side of this chapel present a touching instance of the equality of the grave, which brings down the oppressor to a level with the oppressed, and mingles the dust of the bitterest enemies together. In one is the sepulcher of the haughty Elizabeth, in the other is that of her victim, the lovely and unfortunate Mary. Not an hour in the day but some ejaculation of pity is uttered over the fate of the

latter, mingled with indignation at her oppressor. The walls of Elizabeth's sepulcher continually echo with the sighs of sympathy heaved at the grave of her rival.

"A peculiar melancholy reigns over the aisle where Mary lies buried. The light struggles dimly through windows darkened by dust. The greater part of the place is in deep shadow, and the walls are stained and tinted by time and weather."

The author as he retires from the Abbey thus meditates:

"What is this vast assemblage of sepulchers but a treasury of humiliation—a huge pile of reiterated homilies on the emptiness of renown and the certainty of oblivion! It is indeed the empire of death; his great shadowy palace, where he sits in state, mocking at the relics of human glory, and spreading dust and forgetfulness on the monuments of princes. How idle a boast, after all, is the immortality of a name! Time is ever silently running over his pages; we are too much engrossed by the story of the present to think of the characters and anecdotes that gave interest to the past; and each age is a volume thrown aside to be speedily forgotten.

The idol of to-day pushes the hero of yesterday out of our recollection, and will in turn be supplanted by his successor of to-morrow."

We have the following picture of an English stage-coachman :

"He has commonly a broad, full face, curiously mottled with red, as if the blood had been forced by hard feeding into every vessel of the skin ; he is swelled into jolly dimensions by frequent potations of malt liquors, and his bulk is still further increased by a multiplicity of coats, in which he is buried like a cauliflower, the upper one reaching to his heels. He wears a broad-brimmed, low-crowned hat ; a huge roll of colored handkerchief about his neck, knowingly knotted and tucked in at the bosom ; and has in summer time a large bouquet of flowers in his button-hole, the present, most probably, of some enamored country lass. His waistcoat is commonly of some bright color, striped, and his small clothes extend far below his knees, to meet a pair of jockey boots which reach about half way up his legs. . . . He enjoys great consequence and consideration along the road ; has frequent conferences with the village housewives, who look upon him as a man of great

trust and dependence, and he seems to have a good understanding with every bright eyed country lass. The moment he arrives where the horses are to be changed he throws down the reins with something of an air, and abandons the cattle to the care of the hostler, his duty being merely to drive from one stage to another. When off the box his hands are thrust into the pocket of his great-coat, and he rolls about the inn-yard with an air of the most absolute lordliness. Here he is generally surrounded by an admiring throng of hostlers, stable-boys, shoeblacks, and those nameless hangers on that infest inns and taverns, and run errands, and do all kinds of odd jobs for the privilege of fattening on the drippings of the kitchen and the leakage of the tap-room. These all look up to him as to an oracle; treasure up his cant phrases; echo his opinions about horses and other topics of jockey lore; and, above all, endeavor to imitate his air and carriage. Every ragamuffin that has a coat to his back thrusts his hands into the pockets, rolls in his gait, talks slang, and is an embryo coachey."

"John Bull" is thus pictured:

"John Bull, to all appearance, is a plain,

downright, matter-of-fact fellow, with much less of poetry about him than rich prose. There is a little of romance in his nature, but a vast deal of strong natural feeling. He excels in humor more than in wit; is jolly rather than gay; melancholy rather than morose; can easily be moved to a sudden tear, or surprised into a broad laugh; but he loathes sentiment, and has no turn for light pleasantry. He is a boon companion if you allow him to have his humor, and to talk about himself; and he will stand by a friend in a quarrel with life and purse, however soundly he may be cudgeled. . . .

"His family mansion is an old castellated manor-house, gray with age, and of a most venerable, weather-beaten appearance. It has been built upon no regular plan, but is a vast accumulation of parts, erected in various tastes and ages. The center bears evident traces of Saxon architecture, and is as solid as ponderous stone and old English oak can make it. Like all the relics of that style, it is full of obscure passages, intricate mazes, and dusky chambers; and though these have been partially lighted up in modern days, yet there are many places where you must still grope in the

dark. Additions have been made to the original edifice from time to time, and great alterations have taken place; towers and battlements have been erected during wars and tumults; wings built in time of peace, and out-houses, lodges, and offices run up, according to the whim or convenience of different generations, until it has became one of the most spacious, rambling tenements imaginable."

CHAPTER XIV.

MR. IRVING had now been five years abroad, and during all this time had been by circumstances detained in England. At length the way was open for him to gratify his long-cherished desire and intention to cross the channel, and to visit some of the famous cities and other interesting objects of continental Europe.

Of course he first visited Paris, where he resided nearly a year. Here he made several new and interesting acquaintances, among whom was Moore, the poet,* who, with his wife, was also residing at that time in Paris. Moore was four years the senior of Irving, and on their first acquaintance a mutual and strong friend-

* *Thomas Moore* was born in 1779, and was educated in Dublin, his native city. His writings were voluminous, comprising prose as well as poetry. Some of his earlier poems are, unfortunately, defaced by more or less of pruriency, and have an immoral tendency; but much of his poetry is excellent, and Lalla Rookh comprises strains and passages not excelled in the English language for poetic sweetness and beauty. He died in 1852.

ship commenced between them, which seems to have continued through life. "He is a cheery, joyous fellow," writes Irving in his first notice of him, "full of frank, generous, and manly feeling. His acquaintance is one of the most gratifying things I have met with for some time, as he takes the warm interest of an old friend in me and my concerns." It is needless to add that all such pleasant sentiments were fully reciprocated, and this new and unexpected friendship was one of the special charms for Irving during his residence at the French capital. He also at Paris formed the acquaintance of the English statesman, George Canning,* who showed him much attention, and

* *George Canning* was born in London in 1770, was educated at Eton and Oxford, where he gained high academical honors, and evinced great powers of oratory. He early devoted himself to politics, and in the course of his life sustained numerous important offices. He was several times in the Cabinet, being once Premier, and several times also in Parliament, was a foreign embassador, and was offered the important office of Governor General of India.

He was remarkable as a speaker, while in keen and cutting irony, sparkling wit, sarcasm, and eloquence, he was among the first orators of his time. A newspaper of the day, announcing his death, represents him as "endowed with every choicest gift of nature, had risen from a low condition to the highest office in the State, and centered in himself the best

expressed a very favorable opinion of his writings. Lord John Russell, now Earl Russell,* about ten years the junior of Irving, was also among his distinguished acquaintances at Paris. Here, too, he met his townsman, John Howard Payne,† author of the popular ballad "Home,

hopes of the best men in the civilized world." He died at Chiswick in 1827.

* *Lord John Russell* is third son of the Duke of Bedford, born 1792, and is, of course, now an old man. He studied at the University of Edinburgh, and at twenty-one years of age we find him a member of Parliament, and seems to have been either in Parliament or in the cabinet the most of his life. He early assumed the position of a Parliamentary reformer, and has constantly sustained that character throughout his long public career, and has been earnest and efficient in the several reforms which have been carried in Parliament for the last half century. He was elevated to the peerage in 1861, with the title of Earl Russell. He is an author as well as a statesman, having employed his pen with history, biography, and fiction, besides some miscellaneous works.

† *John Howard Payne* was born in 1792 in New York, and in childhood evinced a precocious genius for poetry and dramatic exercises and exhibitions. He entered Union College, but remained there only a brief period, and in his sixteenth year we find him upon the stage, acting the part of Young Norval at the Park Theater, New York. The most of his subsequent life seems to have been devoted to acting and to dramatic composition, performing at home and abroad with varied success. Of the famous poem, "Home, Sweet Home," one hundred thousand copies had been sold up to 1832 by the original publishers, and it is known and sung the world over. He was for several years United States Consul to Tunis, and died in 1852.

Sweet Home;" also Talma,* the great French tragedian, and Kenney, an Irish dramatic writer of some note, author of "Raising the Wind," a farce in which figures "Jeremy Diddler," one of the most famous characters of humorous fiction.

Just previous to leaving Paris he also made the acquaintance of Bancroft,† the historian,

* *Talma* was born in Paris in 1763, and died there in 1826. He was eminent as an actor of tragedy, to which art he gave his main attention.

† *George Bancroft* is a native of Worcester, Mass., born in 1800, studied at Exeter and Cambridge, graduated at seventeen, embarked for Europe, entered the University of Gottingen, where for two years he pursued an extensive plan of study, comprising German, French, and Italian literature, Oriental languages, civil, ecclesiastical, and natural history, Greek and Roman literature and antiquities, and Greek Philosophy. He received the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at twenty years of age, and in the following spring he commenced traveling through various parts of Europe, and conversed with many learned and eminent men. Returning home in 1822 he served a year as tutor at Harvard, and in 1823, in connection with Dr. Cogswell, established the "Round Hill" school at Northampton, a classical school of high standing. In 1834 he published the first volume of his History of the United States, which has up to this date (1869) reached the ninth volume. It has received great applause, although the last volume has been severely criticised owing to its alleged injustice to one or two Revolutionary officers. Mr. Bancroft was in President Polk's cabinet, and through his influence the Naval School was established. From 1846 to 1849 he was United States Minister to England.

who was then traveling in Europe. He speaks of other interesting acquaintances acquired at Paris, so that his society seems to have been fully as extensive as was consistent with the special purpose of his residence there.

CHAPTER XV.

MR. IRVING, though having designed to proceed immediately on his continental travels, suddenly changed his purpose, and in July, 1821, started on his return to England, and reached London on the day previous to the coronation of George IV. From a position outside Westminster Abbey he witnessed the grand procession passing in. Meeting Sir Walter Scott on the following day, and telling him of his success in witnessing the display, and that he knew not how to manage to secure admission within the Abbey, "Tut, mon," replied Scott, "you should have told them who you were, and you would have got in anywhere."

After a brief stay in London he proceeded, in company with the artist Leslie, to Birmingham, on a visit to his sister, Mrs. Van Wart. Their first day's ride brought them to Oxford, where a violent rain during all the following day confined them to the inn. As they mounted

the coach on the following morning Leslie remarked to Irving something about a certain *stout gentleman* who had accompanied them to Oxford two days before. This was the suggestive hint that gave birth to the story of "The Stout Gentleman." The idea seized strongly and at once the fancy of Irving, and at every opportunity as they went on their journey his pen was working with the greatest rapidity, so that by the time they reached Birmingham the sketch was nearly finished.

All this might be ranked among the "Curiosities of Literature;" and yet, doubtless, the history of literature would reveal to us multitudes of similar examples. A single word, or glance, or walk, or dream has proved the slight germ of some beautiful or stately growth; nor is this to be set down as merely casual or accidental. A great yet secret Providence has more to do with the human mind, and its driftings and inspirations, than short-sighted people ever come to discern. "Think with yourself," says the judicious and pious Dr. Watts, "how easily and how insensibly by one turn of thought He can lead you into a large scene of useful ideas; he can teach you to lay hold on a clue which may

guide your thoughts with safety and ease through all the difficulties of an intricate subject. Think how easily the Author of your being can direct your motions by his providence so that the glance of an eye, or a word striking the ear, or a sudden turn of the fancy, shall conduct you to a train of happy sentiments. By his secret and supreme method of government he can draw you to read such a treatise, or converse with such a person, as may give you more light into some deep subject in an hour than you could obtain by a month of your own solitary labor. Think with yourself with how much ease the God of spirits can cast into your minds some useful suggestion, and give a happy turn to your own thoughts, or the thoughts of those with whom you converse, whence you may derive unspeakable light and satisfaction in a matter that has long puzzled and entangled you; he can show you a path which the vulture's eye has not seen, and lead you, by some unknown gate or portal, out of a wilderness and labyrinth of difficulties wherein you have been long wandering."*

This visit of Irving to his sister proved un-

* Watts on the Improvement of the Mind.

fortunate, he being detained there about four months by ill health, which effectually prevented him from the use of his pen. The tidings received during this interval, of the death of a niece and of his brother William, greatly added to his affliction. His brother's death especially was a severe bereavement. He had anticipated the sad event, but when the news actually came he describes it as "one of the dismalest blows he had ever experienced." This brother, being the eldest, seems to have been as a kind father to all his junior brothers, and "a man full of worth and talents, beloved in private and honored in public life." After about four months of invalid life with his sister at Birmingham Mr. Irving returned to London, his health yet unrestored. He soon, however, sent for publication at New York the first volume of Bracebridge Hall. The second volume soon followed and the work appeared in New York, May 21st, 1822, and in London two days later.

CHAPTER XVI.

"BRACEBRIDGE HALL" may be considered a sort of continuation of the Sketch Book, and comprises various descriptions, essays, and tales relating to English character and habits, and especially as applicable to the olden time. The position of the author is that of a resident, for the time, at the "Hall;" and many of the incidents and scenes of one and another sketch or tale seem to have arisen to his observation during his agreeable sojourn there.

Lady Lillycraft, for example, a visitor to the Hall, has brought with her two pet dogs which are pictured thus: "One is a fat spaniel called Zephyr, though heaven defend me from such a Zephyr! He is fed out of all shape and comfort; his eyes are nearly strained out of his head; he wheezes with corpulency, and cannot walk without great difficulty. The other is a little, old, gray, muzzled curmudgeon, with an unhappy eye that kindles like a coal if you only

look at him; his nose turns up, his mouth is drawn into wrinkles so as to show his teeth; in short, he has altogether the look of a dog far gone in misanthropy, and totally sick of the world. When he walks he has his tail curled up so tight that it seems to lift his feet from the ground; and he seldom makes use of more than three legs at a time, keeping the other drawn up as a reserve. This last wretch is called Beauty.

"These dogs are full of elegant ailments unknown to vulgar dogs, and are petted and nursed by Lady Lillycraft with the tenderest kindness. They have cushions for their express use on which they lie before the fire, and yet are apt to shiver and moan if there is the least draught of air. When any one enters the room they make a most tyrannical barking that is absolutely deafening. They are insolent to all the other dogs of the establishment. There is a noble stag-hound, a great favorite of the squires, who is a privileged visitor to the parlor; but the moment he makes his appearance these intruders fly at him with furious rage, and I have admired the sovereign indifference and contempt with which he seems to look down upon his puny

assailants. When her ladyship drives out, these dogs are generally carried with her to take the air, when they look out of each window of the carriage, and bark at all vulgar pedestrian dogs."

The following extracts from the chapter on "Family Reliques" is interesting as well for the moral involved as for its beauty. The writer alludes, among other things, to the picture gallery of the Hall as abounding most with mementoes of past times:

"There is something strangely pleasing, though melancholy, in considering the long rows of portraits which compose the greater part of the collection. They furnish a kind of narrative of the lives of family worthies, which I am enabled to read with the assistance of the venerable housekeeper, who is the family chronicler, prompted occasionally by Master Simon. There is the progress of a fine lady, for instance, through a variety of portraits. One represents her as a little girl with a long waist and hoop, holding a kitten in her arms, and ogling the spectator out of the corners of her eyes, as if she could not turn her head. In another we find her in the freshness of youthful beauty, when she was a celebrated belle, and so hard-hearted

as to cause several unfortunate gentlemen to run desperate and write bad poetry. In another she is depicted as a stately dame in the maturity of her charms; next to the portrait of her husband is a gallant colonel, in full-bottomed wig and gold-laced hat, who was killed abroad; and, finally, her monument is in the church, the spire of which may be seen from the window, where her effigy is carved in marble, and represents her as a venerable dame of seventy-six.

"There is one group that particularly interested me. It consisted of four sisters of nearly the same age, who flourished about a century since; and, if I may judge from their portraits, were extremely beautiful. I can imagine what a scene of gayety and romance this old mansion must have been when they were in the heyday of their charms; when they passed like beautiful visions through its halls, or stepped daintily to music in the revels and dances of the cedar gallery, or printed with delicate feet the velvet verdure of these lawns.

"When I look at these faint records of gallantry and tenderness; when I contemplate the faded portraits of these beautiful girls, and think, too, that they have long since bloomed, reigned,

grown old, died, and passed away, and with them all their graces, their triumphs, their rivalries, their admirers; the whole empire of love and pleasure in which they ruled—'all dead, all buried, all forgotten'—I find a cloud of melancholy stealing over the present gayeties around me. I was gazing in a musing mood this very morning at the portrait of the lady whose husband was killed abroad, when the fair Julia entered the gallery leaning on the arm of the captain. The sun shone through the row of windows on her as she passed along, and she seemed to beam out each time into brightness, and relapse into shade, until the door at the bottom of the gallery closed after her. I felt a sadness of heart at the idea that this was an emblem of her lot; a few more years of sunshine and shade, and all this life and loveliness and enjoyment will have ceased, and nothing be left to commemorate this beautiful being but one more perishable portrait, to awaken, perhaps, the trite speculations of some future loiterer like myself, when I and my scribblings shall have lived through our brief existence and been forgotten."

In the "Stout Gentleman" is a picture of

things with a feverish man confined during a wet Sunday at a country inn :

"A wet Sunday in a country inn! Whoever has had the luck to experience one can alone judge of my situation. The rain pattered against the casements, the bells tolled for church with a melancholy sound. I went to the windows in quest of something to amuse the eye, but it seemed as if I had been placed out of the reach of all amusement. The windows of my bedroom looked out among tiled roofs and stacks of chimneys, while those of my sitting-room commanded a full view of the stable-yard. I know of nothing more calculated to make a man sick of this world than a stable-yard on a rainy day. The place was littered with wet straw that had been kicked about by travelers and stable boys. In one corner was a stagnant pool of water surrounding an island of muck. There were several half-drowned fowls crowded together under a cart, among which was a miserable crest-fallen cock, drenched out of all life and spirit, his drooping tail matted, as it were, into a single feather, along which the water trickled from his back. Near the cart was a half-dozing cow, chewing the cud and standing

patiently to be rained on, with wreaths of vapor rising from her reeking hide. A wall-eyed horse, tired of the loneliness of the stable, was poking his spectral head out of a window, with the rain dropping on it from the eaves. An unhappy cur, chained to a dog-house hard by, uttered something every now and then between a bark and a yelp. A drab of a kitchen wench tramped backward and forward through the yard in pattens, looking as sulky as the weather itself. Every thing, in short, was comfortless and forlorn, excepting a crew of hard-drinking ducks, assembled like boon companions round a puddle, and making a riotous noise over their liquor."

The "Edinburgh Review" thus glances at a few other pieces of the "Bracebridge Hall" miscellany:

"'Ready Money Jack' is admirable throughout, and the old general very good. The lovers are, as usual, the most insipid.

"The 'Gypsies' are sketched with infinite elegance as well as spirit, and Master Simon is quite delightful in all the varieties of his ever-versatile character.

"Of the tales which serve to fill up the vol-

umes, that of 'Dolph Heyliger' is incomparably the best, and is more characteristic, perhaps, both of the author's turn of imagination and cast of humor than any thing else in the work.

"'The Student of Salamanca' is too long, and deals rather largely in the common-places of romantic adventure."

CHAPTER XVII.

"BRACEBRIDGE HALL" being off his hands, Mr. Irving gave himself a season of relaxation, and, receiving numerous invitations from fashionable people in London and vicinity, he passed the succeeding summer as gayly as the imperfect condition of his health would permit. Early in autumn he embarked for Holland. Spending several days at Rotterdam, the Hague, Amsterdam, and one or two other places, he ascended the Rhine to Aix-la-Chapelle to enjoy the use of the baths. He also spent a short time at Mayence, Frankfort, and Heidelberg. He was greatly delighted with the scenery of the Rhine, and the fruitfulness and beauty of the country generally; while the atmosphere, as he inhaled it, seemed to exert an invigorating and balmy influence upon his physical system. He afterward journeys farther up the Rhine, enjoys the baths of Baden, and is charmed with the delightful scenery every-where presented to view. He then sets

his face eastward toward Vienna. Passing the Black Forest, and crossing Wirtemberg to Saltzburg, he for a few days refreshed himself with various little excursions, visited the famous salt-works, looked with pleasure upon the Tyrolese mountains stretching along the south, and already (Oct. 1) capped with snow, and pronounced Saltzburg one of the most romantic spots which he had ever beheld. Thence, after a few days, he resumed his journey, and, traveling all night, he was the next day at Vienna.

This great and opulent capital was not to his taste. He found it a city given to luxury and dissipation rather than devoted to more elevated pursuits, and after a brief stay, with one or two excursions abroad, he took leave for Dresden on the 18th of November. The tedious complaint which had so long afflicted him was now almost entirely healed, and brighter prospects than before seemed opening before him. On the fifth day, after traversing a rude and gloomy country, he reached Prague, whence two and a half days more brought him to Dresden. The whole aspect of things suddenly changes as he passes from Bohemia and descends the mountains into Saxony, and excel-

lent roads, pleasant farm-houses, rosy gleams on the still waters of the Elbe, the fishing boats, the balmy skies, joined with a view of the distant city, with its cluster of spires and domes, all combine to throw an air of enchantment around the closing hours of his journey. Dresden was his home for six months, and seems to have proved a delightful residence. His literary fame had preceded him, and he was at once introduced to the first society of the place.

Irving was at this time in his fortieth year, and we have the following description of him as he now appeared by one of his Dresden friends, an English lady sojourning there:

"He was thoroughly a gentleman, not merely externally in manners and look, but to the innermost fibers and core of his heart. Sweet tempered, gentle, fastidious, sensitive, and gifted with the warmest affections, the most delightful and invariably interesting companion, gay and full of humor, even in spite of occasional fits of melancholy, which he was, however, seldom subject to when with those he liked—a gift of conversation that flowed like a full river of sunshine, bright, easy, and abundant."

Mr. Irving was soon presented by the British Minister to the royal family, comprising the King and Queen, two brothers, two daughters, and two grandsons with their wives. With all these, together with foreign dignitaries resident at Court, Irving seems to have associated as an equal; and he participates in royal visits, receptions, dinings, balls, soirees, huntings, etc., as fully and freely as if himself were of regular royal descent. "I have been," he writes to his brother Peter, "most hospitably received, and even caressed, in this little capital, and have experienced nothing but the most marked kindness from the King downward. My reception, indeed, at Court has been peculiarly flattering, and every branch of the royal family has taken occasion to show me particular attention whenever I made my appearance."

Among his most select and pleasant associates at Dresden were the Fosters, an English family of rank, comprising mother and two daughters, the latter being educated there. In this delightful little circle Irving early became an intimate, and their house was to him a sunny and attractive home. With their assistance he diligently improved himself in the French and Italian

languages, while among his pleasant amusements were the private theatricals gotten up and performed at the Fosters', and in which Irving and a few English residents participated.

It may well be supposed that with all the flattering attentions which Mr. Irving received at Dresden, and the frequent amusements in which he mingled, his pen would be likely to make but little progress. His own confession corroborates such an inference. "I wish," he writes to a sister, "I could give you a good account of my literary labors; but I have nothing to report. I am merely seeing and hearing, and my mind seems in too crowded and confused a condition to produce any thing." Thus, aside from his progress in the French, Italian, and German languages, his winter's work seems to have amounted to but little. We have from him another confession, and one of great importance, as he is about to leave Dresden. In a letter to Mrs. Foster, after reviewing the pleasant evenings he had enjoyed at her home, he adds that he would not give one such evening for all the routs and assemblies of the fashionable world; that he was weary and sick of fashionable life and fashionable parties; that he

had never submitted himself to this current for a time but he had ultimately been cast exhausted and spiritless upon the shore. He remarks with pain upon the sacrifice of the nobler and better feelings in this kind of intercourse. "We crowd together in cities," says he, "and bring down our minds to the routine of visits and formalities, and associate ourselves with littleness and insipidity, and 'say unto the worm, Thou art my brother and my sister.' We subject ourselves to the claims and importunities of people we dislike, and the censorship of people whom we despise. The whole swarm of insects that buzz around us cannot administer to our pleasure; but one by his paltry sting may torment us."

It may not be necessary to moralize extensively upon a confession like this, uttered by one like Irving—a man already famous, in the prime of manhood, moving in the very highest circles, flattered and caressed as extensively as he was known. But we can scarcely refrain from reverting to another confession following a course of prosperity the most magnificent possible, of which confession we have the formula following:

"Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labor that I had labored to do: and, behold, all was vanity and vexation of spirit, and there was no profit under the sun."

CHAPTER XVIII.

HAVING passed about eight months at Dresden, Mr. Irving departed for Paris about the middle of July. The Fosters left at the same time on their return to England, and Irving accompanied them, as a sort of escort and protector, as far as Rotterdam. Having seen these, his dear friends, safely embarked for London, he immediately pursued his journey, and reached Paris early in August.

His miscellaneous mode of life for so long a time had its effect upon him, and it was with some difficulty that he could settle his mind to any weighty and steady literary pursuit. He passed the autumn in some dramatic efforts, which at the instance of Mr. Payne he was induced, in company with the latter, to undertake. These consisted of the translation and recasting of certain French plays, to be modified and fitted to the English stage. It was stipulated that Irving's name should not appear in connection with these productions,

which were afterward acted with success in London.

The ensuing winter seems to have passed without much literary labor. His journal presents him as reading various authors, dining with various friends, and giving less attention to theaters than formerly. We find him engaged in some revision of "Salmagundi" for a French publisher. The same publisher, Galignani, proposes to him the getting up of an edition of English authors, accompanied with biographical sketches. Irving accepts the proposition, stipulating for two hundred and fifty francs per volume, and at once commenced on this new enterprise, beginning with a life of Goldsmith.

In the spring he arranges, by correspondence with his London publisher, for the purchase of his forthcoming "Tales of a Traveler," for four thousand five hundred dollars. The manuscript was partly prepared, and after the arrangement with his publisher he seems to have proceeded more diligently than before with the work—at the same time giving encouragement to his publisher that it would excel any of his former works.

At the end of spring he leaves Paris for

London, where he was invited by the poet Spencer * to take lodgings with him. He also enjoys pleasant relations with the poet Rogers,† with whom he had frequent interesting conversations. In June he spends some days at the manor-house of Mr. Compton, "a complete specimen of a complete country gentleman." Here he is greatly delighted with the scenery, residence, and its occupants. Thence he goes to Bath, where he again meets his friend Moore, and accompanies him to his beautiful cottage a few miles away. After a brief visit with his

* William Robert Spencer was the grandson of the Duke of Marlborough, born in 1769, was a wit and man of fashion. His poems were principally ballads and occasional pieces, some of which are of special elegance. He died in Paris in 1834, and in the following year his poems, with a memoir, were collected and published.

† Samuel Rogers was born in 1763. His "Pleasures of Memory" first gave him a place among English poets. Besides this, his "Voyage of Columbus," "Jacqueline," "Human Life," and "Italy," were his principal poetic productions. He was offered the laureateship on the death of Wordsworth, which, by reason of his advanced age, he declined.

Rogers was a gentleman of fortune and ample hospitalities, and for half a century his house was a favorite resort of literary men. He seems to have written slowly, the "Pleasures of Memory" occupying him nine years, (about eighty lines a year) "Human Life" about the same time, and "Italy" sixteen years. He retained his faculties to near the close of life, dying in 1855, at the age of ninety-two.

sister and family at Birmingham, he spends several days with his Dresden friends, the Fosters, at their residence near Bedford, where of course he is received with the most cordial welcome. He subsequently makes a hasty excursion to Yorkshire.

Amid these various summer visits and movements Irving was giving the finishing touches to his new work and passing it through the press. Having corrected the last proof-sheet, and completed the financial arrangements with his publisher, he immediately left London, and two days afterward he was at his lodgings, a few miles out from Paris.

The "Tales of a Traveler" was published in London, August 25. Its publication at New York was in four numbers, ranging from August 24 to October 9, at which date the American edition was completed.

In a very prompt letter from Moore is the following: "Your book is delightful. I never can answer for what the public will like, but if they do not devour this with their best appetite then is good writing, good fun, good sense, and all other goods of authorship thrown away upon them."

But men, alas! and even friends, do not always tell an author their inmost thoughts touching the efforts of his pen. This same Moore about the same time thus enters in his diary: "Irving read me some parts of his new work, 'Tales of a Traveler.' Rather tremble for its fate." In fact, as a general thing, this work was received by the English public with less favor than its two predecessors, and it was severely criticised in several of the British Reviews. The "London Quarterly" finds little to commend save Buchthorne's autobiography, which is pronounced to be excellent, while most of the remaining pieces are little else than "the sweepings of the Sketch Book."

Buckthorne's visit in his mature years to his native village will call up meetings and memories similar to his in more minds than one.

"As I was rambling pensively through a neighboring meadow, in which I had many a time gathered primroses, I met the very pedagogue who had been the tyrant and dread of my boyhood. I had sometimes vowed to myself, when suffering under his rod, that I would have my revenge if I ever met him when I had grown to be a man. The time had come, but I

had no disposition to keep my vow. The few years which had matured me into a vigorous man had shrunk him into decrepitude. He appeared to have had a paralytic stroke. I looked at him, and wondered that this poor, helpless mortal could have been an object of terror to me; that I should have watched with anxiety the glance of that failing eye, or dreaded the power of that trembling hand. He tottered feebly along the path, and had some difficulty in getting over a stile. I ran and assisted him. He looked at me with surprise, but did not recognize me, and made a low bow of humility and thanks. I had no disposition to make myself known, for I felt that I had nothing to boast of. The pains he had taken and the pains he had inflicted had been equally useless. His repeated predictions had been fully verified, and I felt that little Jack Buckthorne, the idle boy, had grown to be a very good-for-nothing man."

Farther on are portrayed Buckthorne's visit to his mother's grave, and his experiences there.

"I sought my mother's grave. The weeds were already matted over it, and the tombstone was half hid among nettles. I cleared them away, and they stung my hands; but I was

heedless of the pain, for my heart ached too severely. I sat down on the grave and read over and over again the epitaph on the stone.

"It was simple, but it was true. I had written it myself. I had tried to write a poetical epitaph, but in vain. My feelings refused to utter themselves in rhyme. My heart had gradually been filling during my lonely wanderings; it was now charged to the brim and overflowed. I sank upon the grave, and buried my face in the tall grass, and wept like a child. Yes, I wept in manhood upon the grave as I had in infancy upon the bosom of my mother. Alas! how little do we appreciate a mother's tenderness while living! How heedless are we in youth of all her anxieties and kindness! But when she is dead and gone, when the cares and coldness of the world come withering to our hearts, when we find how hard it is to find true sympathy—how few love us for ourselves, how few will befriend us in our misfortunes—then it is that we think of the mother we have lost. It is true I had always loved my mother, even in my most heedless days; but I felt how inconsiderate and ineffectual had been my love. My heart melted as I retraced the days of in-

fancy, when I was led by a mother's hand, and rocked to sleep in a mother's arms, and was without care or sorrow. 'O my mother!' exclaimed I, burying my face again in the grass of the grave; 'O that I were once more by your side, sleeping never to wake again on the cares and troubles of this world!'"

CHAPTER XIX.

"BLACKWOOD" for January, 1825, indulges in a sort of sweeping and amusing resumé of Irving and so many of his works as have thus far been alluded to, and comprising a curious intermingling of the sweet and bitter. It considers that the author had been abused by overmuch praise, and then by being treacherously neglected by his friends, and affects to come to the rescue and generously place him upon his true position.

"Yes, it is time," says 'Blackwood,' (John Neal,) "for us to interpose. We throw our shield over him, therefore. We undertake, once for all, to see fair play. Open the field, withdraw the rabble, drive back the dogs, *give* him fair play, and we will answer for his acquitting himself like a man. If he do not, why let him be torn to pieces and be—

"In the day of his popularity we showed him no favor; in this, the day of his tribulation, we shall show him none. He does not require

any. We saw his faults when there was nobody else to see them. We put our finger upon the sore places about him; drove our weapon home, up to the hilt, wherever we found a hole in his beautiful armor—a joint visible in his golden harness; treated him, in short, as he deserves to be treated, like a man; but we have never done, we never will do him wrong. . . .

"One word of his life and personal appearance (both of which are laughably misrepresented) before we take up his works. He was born, we believe, in the *city* of New York; began to write for a newspaper at an early age; read law, but gave it up in despair, feeling, as Cowper did before him, a disqualifying constitutional timidity which would not permit him to go out into public life; engaged in mercantile adventure; appeared first in 'Salmagundi;' wrote some articles for the American magazines; was unsuccessful in business; embarked for England, where, since he came to be popular, anybody may trace him.

"He is now in his fortieth year *—about five feet seven, agreeable countenance, black hair,

* Mistake; in his forty-third year.

manly complexion; fine hazel eyes when lighted up, heavy in general; talks better than he writes when worthily excited, but falls asleep, literally asleep, in his chair at a formal dinner party in high life; half the time in a revery; a little impediment, a sort of uneasy, anxious, catching inspiration of the voice when talking zealously; writes a small neat hand like Montgomery, Allan Cunningham or Shea, (it is like that of each;) indolent, nervous, irritable, easily depressed, easily disheartened, very amiable, no appearance of special refinement, nothing remarkable, nothing uncommon about him; precisely such a man, to say all in a word, as people would continually overlook, pass by without notice or forget after dining with him, unless, peradventure, his name were mentioned, in which case, odds-bobs! they are all able to recall something remarkable in his way of sitting, eating, or looking, though, like Oliver Goldsmith himself, he had never opened his mouth while they were near, or sat in a high chair, as far into it as he could get, with his toes just reaching the floor.

"We come now to the works of Geoffrey:

"1. *The Newspaper Essays.*—Boyish, theatrical criticisms, nothing more; foolishly and wickedly

reproduced by some base, mercenary countryman of his, from the rubbish of old printing-offices, put forth as '*by the Author of the Sketch-Book.*' How could such things be 'by the Author of the Sketch-Book,' written, as they were, twenty years before the Sketch-Book was thought of? By whom *were* they written? By a boy. Was *he* the author of what we call 'The Sketch-Book?' No. The Sketch-Book was written by a man, a full-grown man. *Ergo*, the American publisher told a —. Nevertheless, there is a touch of Irving's quality in these pages, paltry as they are; a little of that happy, sly humor, that grave pleasantry, (wherein he resembles Goldsmith so much,) that quiet, shrewd, good-humored sense of the ridiculous, which altogether, in our opinion, go to make up the chief excellence of Geoffrey, that which will outlive the fashion of this day, and set him apart, after all, from every writer in our language.

"*Salamagundi; or Whim-Whams.*—It is a work in two volumes duodecimo; essays after the manner of Goldsmith—a downright, secret, labored, continual imitation of him, abounding too in plagiarisms. The title is from our English *Flim-Flams;* Oriental Papers, The Little Man

in Black, etc., from the 'Citizen of the World;' Parts are capital; as a whole, the work is quite superior to any thing of the kind which this age has produced. . . .

"*Knickerbocker.*—A droll, humorous history of New York, while the Dutch who settled it were in power, conceived, matured, and brought forth in a bold original temper, unaided and alone, by Irving; more entirely the natural thought, language, humor, and feeling of the man himself, without imitation or plagiarism—far more—than either of his late works. It is written too in the fervor and flush of his popularity at home, after he had got a name such as no other man had among his countrymen; after Salmagundi had been read with pleasure all over North America. In it, however, there is a world of rich allusion, a vein of sober caricature, the merit of which is little understood here. Take an example: 'Von Poffenburg' is a portrait—outrageously distorted on some accounts, but, nevertheless, a portrait—of General Wilkinson, a 'bellipotent' officer who sent in a bill to Congress for sugar-plums, or cigars, or both, after 'throwing up'—in disgust, we dare say, as 'he could not stomach it'—his military command

upon the Florida frontier. So, too, in the three Dutch governors we could point out a multitude of laughable secret allusions to three of the American chief magistrates—Adams, Jefferson, Madison—which have not always been well understood anywhere by any body, save those who are familiar with American history.

"By nine readers out of ten, perhaps, Knickerbocker is read as a piece of generous drollery, nothing more. Be it so. It will wear the better; the design of Irving himself is not always clear, nor was he always undeviating in his course. Truth or fable, fact or falsehood, it was all the same to him if a bit of material came in his way.

"In a word, we look upon this volume of Knickerbocker—though it *is* tiresome, though there *are* some wretched failures in it, a little overdoing of the humorous, and a little confusion of purpose throughout—as a work honorable to English literature; manly, bold, and so *altogether original*, without being extravagant, as to stand alone among the labors of men.

"*Naval Biography.*—Some of these papers are bravely done. In general they are eloquent, simple, clear, and beautiful. Among the 'Lives,'

that of poor Perry, the young fresh-water Nelson, who swept Lake Erie of our fleet in such a gallant, seaman-like style, is quite remarkable, as containing within itself proof that Irving has the heart of a poet. . . . It is not when he tries that Irving is poetical. It is only where he is transported suddenly by some beautiful thought —carried away, without knowing why, by inward music, his heart beating, his respiration hurried. He is never the man to call up the anointed before him at will, to imagine spectacles, or people the air, earth, and sea, like a wizard, by the waving of his hand. He has only the *heart* of a poet. He has not, he never will have, the *power* of one. It is too late now. Power comes of perpetual warfare, trial, hardship; he has grown up in perpetual quiet, sunshine, a sort of genteel repose. He may continue, therefore, to feel poetry, to think poetry, to utter poetry, by chance; but he will never be able to *do* poetry now as he might have done it before this, if he had been worthily tempered, year after year, by wind or fire, rain or storm.

"*Sketch-Book*.—Irving had now come to be regarded as a professional author; to think of his pen for a livelihood. His mercantile specu-

lations were disastrous. We are glad of it. It is all the better for him, his country, our literature, us. But for that lucky misfortune he would never have been half what he now is. But for his present humiliation he would never be half what he will *now* be, if we rightly understand his character.

"*Strange*, but so it was. The accidental association, the fortuitous conjunction of two or three young men for the purpose of amusing the town with a few pages a month in Salmagundi, led straightway to a total change of all their views in life. Two of them, certainly, perhaps all three, became professional authors in a country where only *one* (poor Brown) had *ever* appeared before. Two of them have l come greatly distinguished as writers; the third (Verplanck) somewhat so by the little that he has written. . . .

"The Sketch-Book is a timid, beautiful work, with some childish pathos in it, some rich, pure, bold poetry, a little squeamish, puling, lady-like sentimentality, some courageous writing, some wit, and a world of humor so happy, so natural, so altogether unlike that of any other men, dead or alive, that we would rather have been the

writer of it fifty times over than of any thing else that he has ever written.

"The touches of poetry are every-where; but never where one would look for them. Irving has no passion; he fails utterly in true pathos —cannot speak as if he were carried away by any thing. He is always thoughtful; and, save where he tries to be fine or sentimental, always at home, always natural. The 'dusty splendor' of Westminster Abbey—the ship 'staggering' over the precipices of the ocean—the shark 'darting like a specter through the blue waters;' all these things are poetry—such poetry as never was, never will be surpassed. We could mention fifty more passages, epithets, words of power, which no mere *prose* writer would have dared under any circumstances to use. They are like the 'invincible looks' of Milton, revealing the god in spite of every disguise. . . .

"The bravest article that Irving ever wrote is that about our 'English Writers on America.' There is more manhood, more sincerity, more straight-forward, generous plain dealing in that one paper than, perhaps, in all his other works. He felt what he said, every word of it,

had nothing to lose, and, of course, wrote intrepidly. Did we like him the worse for it? No, indeed. It was that very paper which made him respectable in this country.

"*Rip Van Winkle* is well done; but we have no patience with such a man as Washington Irving. We cannot keep our temper when we catch him pilfering the materials of other men—working up old stories. We had as lief see him before the public for some Bow-street offense.

"The *Wife* is ridiculous, with some beautiful description; but Irving, as we said before, has no idea of true passion, suffering, or deep, desolating power.

"*The Mutability of Literature.*—The Art of Book-making, etc., are only parts of the same essay; it has no superior in our language. . . .

"*Traits of Indian Character.*—Very good, very; so far as they go, historically true. Irving has been instrumental, however, by twice taking the field in favor of the North American savages. He has made it fashionable.

"*Bracebridge Hall.*—*Stout Gentlemen*, very good, and a pretty fair account of real occur-

rence.* *Student of Salamanca*, beneath contempt. Irving has no idea of genuine romance, or love, or any thing else, we believe, that ever seriously troubles the blood of men.

"*Rookery.*—Struck off in a few hours, contrary to what has been said. Irving does not labor as people suppose; he is too indolent; given too much, we know, to reverie.

"*Dolph Heyliger, The Haunted House, Storm-Ship.*—All in the fashion of his early time. Perhaps—we are greatly inclined so to believe—perhaps the remains of what was meant for Salmagundi or Knickerbocker; the rest of the two volumes quite unworthy of Irving's reputation.

"*Tales of a Traveler.*—We hardly know how to speak of this sad affair, when we think of what Irving might have done, without losing our temper. It is bad enough, base enough, to steal that which would make us wealthy forever; but, like the plundering Arab, to steal rubbish—any thing, from any body, every body—would indicate a helpless moral temperament, a standard of self-estimation beneath every thing. No wonder that people have begun to question his

* A hint of plagiarism.

originality when they find him receiving the paltry material of newspapers, letters, romances. In the early part of these two volumes we shall never see any merit, knowing as we do the sources of what he is serving up, however admirable were his new arrangement of the dishes, however great his improvement. A part of the book, a few scenes, a few pages, are quite equal to any thing that he ever wrote."

The reviewer thus concludes:

"One word of advice to him before we part, probably, *forever*. No man gets credit by repeating the story of another; it is like dramatizing a poet. If you succeed, *he* gets all the praise; if you fail, *you* get all the disgrace. You, Geoffrey Crayon, have great power—original power. We rejoice in your failure now because we believe it will drive you into a style of original composition far more worthy of yourself. Go to work. Lose no time. Your foundations will be the stronger for this reform. You cannot write a novel, a poem, a love-tale, or a tragedy. But you *can* write another *Sketch-Book* worth all that you have ever written if you will draw only from yourself. You have

some qualities that no other living writer has, a bold, quiet humor, a rich, beautiful mode of painting without caricature, a delightful, free, happy spirit—make use of them. We look to see you all the better for this trouncing. God bless you! Farewell."

CHAPTER XX.

IRVING, as we have seen, returned to Paris simultaneously with the publication of "Tales of a Traveler," and from the summer of 1824 he resided there an entire year. During the autumn he occupied lodgings a short distance out of the city, in order that he might be free from the various annoying interruptions to which he was subjected in town. He had become famous in literature, and this led to sundry calls, and many invitations to fashionable visits, parties, balls, etc.; amusements which had now obviously lost, in some degree, their charm for him, while they proved a sad interference with his intellectual and literary pursuits.

At the same time, however, it is quite noticeable that, during the autumn of 1824, and throughout the year 1825, Irving accomplished comparatively little with his pen. His new work had encountered, as we have seen, some severe strictures from the critics both in England and America, and his sensitive nature

quailed under the influence, and his spirits were often much depressed. Some of his letters betray decided regrets that he had not adopted a different path of life, devoting himself in his youth to some substantial and regular employment, and not have ventured upon the uncertain career of literature. To a promising nephew who had recently graduated, and who seemed somewhat inclined to a literary life, he addressed about this time a deeply interesting letter, in which he expressed a hope that none of his near and special friends would be led to imitate his example in wandering into what he terms "the seducive and treacherous paths of literature." He assured his nephew that such a life was precarious both as to profits and enjoyment that though he had himself been somewhat prosperous in authorship, he would dissuade all whom he could influence from hazarding their fortunes to the pen, and that he was anticipating with pleasure the time when he should be above the necessity of writing. "If," he adds, "you think my path has been a flowery one you are greatly mistaken. It has too often lain among thorns and brambles, and been darkened by care and despondency. Many

and many a time have I regretted that at my early outset in life I had not been imperiously bound down to some regular and useful mode of life, and been thoroughly inured to habits of business ; and I have a thousand times regretted with bitterness that ever I was led away by my imagination."

We are not yet disposed to quarrel with admonitions and reflections like these. They may be appropriate to pens that are employed mainly for bread ; but the view, on the whole, seems too much tinctured with what is morbid and worldly. The pen may have and perform a mission as sacred and noble as the Christian ministry itself, and hence *duty*, as truly as a mere expediency, may point to a diligent and conscientious career of authorship. With the views alluded to by Irving in this letter to his nephew a man may write or do otherwise, as may be his preference. But a more elevated and purer vision may lead one to decide and act on a very different principle. If it be in an author's mind to write for the mere amusement of his readers, we may conceive it optional with himself whether he will write or engage in one of sundry other occupations ; but if, on the other

hand, there seem "a necessity upon him" to write for the edification of the multitude, then the optional feature is by no means so apparent.

As winter came on Irving removed into town and established his quarters with his brother Peter, who was also living a bachelor life at Paris. Previously, however, and in the early days of October, the two brothers made an excursion into the country, that they might enjoy an opportunity to see more of the beautiful realm of France than they had yet observed. The weather proved to be all they could wish, being serene and delightful, while the golden autumn imparted its peculiar tints to the pleasant and sprightly scenery that opened up before them on every hand. Their path lay along the banks of the Loire, and towns and castles famous in story, and richly wooded hills overlooking far-reaching vales, were spread out before them in enchanting loveliness. After a nine days' ramble they returned to their winter quarters in Rue Richelieu, No. 89.

Their establishment here seems to have been very complete and comfortable, except that it had to be reached by mounting several flights

of stairs. Their rooms opened into each other, and were excellently well fitted up and furnished. A French servant-woman acted as cook, chamber-maid, butler, and footman, "who," says Irving, "keeps every thing in the neatest order, and chatters even faster than she works." The brothers had their separate rooms, and each could follow his own business without interfering with the other, one of the very best libraries in the world was within five minutes' walk of their lodgings, and to which they enjoyed full and free access. Is not here a picture for a student or an author? Surely much might be expected from comforts and advantages like these.

Yet, as we have already noticed, but little was accomplished under circumstances so propitious. The autumn, winter, and the succeeding spring and summer passed away, leaving but slight fruits of that facile and beautiful pen. There were attempts at plottings and plannings. One and another theme arose before the mind's eye. Some essays were projected and written with a view of being grouped into a volume, but they seem to have never seen the light. For months there are hints of "sleepless nights," "uncomfortable thoughts," "a

heavy heart," "deep depression," and the like. Nor while his pen was thus palsied is there much evidence of any systematic or extensive reading, though he was dwelling under the shadow of an immense library. His principal study seems to have been the Spanish language, which, it is presumed, he cultivated with commendable diligence, having in view even then, without doubt, a sojourn in Spain, and an introduction to its literature.

Toward the last of September of this year the two brothers left Paris for Bordeaux, where they remained about four months. Here Irving represents himself as visiting, rambling, and writing some, and closes up the year with saying, "A year very little of which I would willingly live over again, though some parts have been tolerably pleasant."

CHAPTER XXI.

IN the beginning of the year 1826, and while still at Bordeaux, Mr. Irving writes to Mr. Alexander H. Everett, then United States Minister at the Court of Spain, inquiring whether it would be possible for him to be attached to the embassy, as he would then, in his contemplated travels in Spain, be under its protection. Mr. Everett at once responded favorably, attached Irving as desired, and forwarded him a passport. The Minister further suggested to him the idea of a translation of the "Voyages of Columbus," just from the press by Navarette, and which would probably bring him a liberal compensation.

Under these pleasant auspices and prospects the two brothers started immediately from Bordeaux for Madrid, arriving February 15. An examination of Navarette's "Voyages" impressed him that from the character of the work it was better fitted as *materials* of history than as history itself, and the idea of an original

Life of Columbus was at once suggested to his mind. He immediately commenced such a work, and prosecuted it with untiring diligence, sometimes writing all day and far into the night during five or six months.

At the end of this time he conceived the idea of writing a history of the Conquest of Grenada, and leaving for a time his "Columbus" he plunged into this new undertaking, and in three months the rough draft of the work was completed, and he resumed his former manuscript. Hence his closing record of this year is far more satisfactory than that of the preceding, and is eminently worth quoting. "And so ends the year 1826, which has been a year of the hardest application and toil of the pen I have ever passed. I feel more satisfied, however, with the manner in which I have passed it than I have been with that of many gayer years, and close this year of my life in better humor with myself than I have often done."

A suggestive lesson! The retrospect of "gayer years" is one; that of years of close and useful application is another; and which will be the pleasanter of the two henceforth and always admits of no doubt or question.

Irving's bow continued to "abide in strength." As the winter and spring advanced he still continued diligently at his manuscript of Columbus. Various difficulties arose as he advanced. New light would spring up on one and another point which he deemed already settled, so that numerous passages must be rewritten which he had thought to be finished and nearly off of his hands. By the end of July, however, and about eighteen months from the date of its commencement, the work was completed and ready for the press. As was usual with him, it was published simultaneously in London and New York.

For the copy-right of this work Mr. Irving received from his London publisher about sixteen thousand dollars. From so liberal a compensation it may be inferred that this publisher esteemed the work the best that the author had yet written. Southey to whom the manuscript was first shown, praised it unqualifiedly "both as to matter and manner." A reviewer in the London Times, bating some alleged faults, admits it to be elegantly and agreeably written—a most delightful production. Sir James Mackintosh gave the work flattering commendations,

and it was reviewed with special favor in the North American Review by Alexander H. Everett, than whom few in the whole literary world were more competent to criticise fairly and justly such a work.

"This," says Mr. Everett, "is one of those works which are at the same time the delight of readers and the despair of critics. It is as nearly perfect as any work well can be; and there is, therefore, little or nothing left for the reviewer but to write at the bottom of every page, as Voltaire said he should be obliged to do if he published a commentary on Racine, *Pulchrè! benè! optimè!* He has at length filled up the void that before existed in this respect in the literature of the world, and produced a work which will fully satisfy the public, and supersede the necessity of any future labors in the same field. . . . For the particular kind of historical writing in which Mr. Irving is fitted to labor and excel, the Life of Columbus is undoubtedly one of the very best, perhaps we might say without the fear of mistake the very best, subject afforded by the annals of the world. In treating this happy and splendid subject, Mr. Irving has brought out the full force of his

genius as far as a just regard for the principles of historical writing would admit."

Doubtless this testimony is conclusive touching the merit of this work, although numerous others might be easily adduced, and from the most respectable sources, such as Prescott, Story, Kent, etc.

We must indulge in an extract or two:

1. *The Man.*—"He was, at that time, in the full vigor of manhood, and of an engaging presence. Minute descriptions are given of his person by his son Fernando, by Las Casas, and others of his contemporaries. According to these accounts, he was tall, well-formed, muscular, and of an elevated and dignified demeanor. His visage was long, and neither full nor meager; his complexion fair and freckled, and inclined to ruddy; his nose aquiline; his cheek-bones were rather high, his eyes light gray and apt to enkindle; his whole countenance had an air of authority. His hair in his youthful days was of a light color, but care and trouble, according to Las Casas, soon turned it to gray, and at thirty years of age it was quite white. He was moderate and simple in diet and apparel, eloquent in discourse, engaging and affable with

strangers, and of an amiableness and suavity in domestic life that strongly attached his household to his person. His temper was naturally irritable, but he subdued it by the magnanimity of his spirit, comporting himself with a courteous and gentle gravity, and never indulging in any intemperance of language. Throughout his life he was noted for a strict attention to the offices of religion, observing rigorously the fasts and ceremonies of the Church; nor did his piety consist in mere forms, but partook of that lofty and solemn enthusiasm with which his whole character was strongly marked."

2. *The Ships.*—"After the great difficulties made by various courts in furnishing this expedition, it is surprising how inconsiderable an armament was required. It is evident that Columbus had reduced his requisitions to the narrowest limits, lest any great expense should cause impediment. Three small vessels were apparently all that he had requested. Two of them were light barks, called caravels, not superior to river and coasting craft of more modern days. Representations of this class of vessels exist in old prints and paintings. They are delineated as open and without deck in the

center, but built up high at the prow and stern, with forecastles and cabins for the accommodation of the crew. Peter Martyr, the learned contemporary of Columbus, says that only one of the three vessels was decked. The smallness of the vessels was considered an advantage by Columbus in a voyage of discovery, enabling him to run close to the shores and to enter shallow rivers and harbors. In his third voyage, when coasting the gulf of Paria, he complained of the size of his ship, being nearly a hundred tons burden. But that such long and perilous expeditions into unknown seas should be undertaken in vessels without decks, and that they should live through violent tempests, by which they were frequently assailed, remain among the singular circumstances of these daring voyages."

3. *The Approach.*—"For three days they stood in this direction, and the further they went the more frequent and encouraging were the signs of land. Flights of small birds of various colors, some of them such as sing in the fields, came flying about the ships, and then continued toward the south-west, and others were heard also flying by in the night. Funny-fish played about the smooth sea, and a heron, a pelican, and a duck

were seen, all bound in the same direction. The herbage which floated by the ships was fresh and green, as if recently from land; and the air, Columbus observes, was sweet and fragrant as April breezes in Seville.

"All these, however, were regarded by the crews as so many delusions beguiling them on to destruction; and when, on the evening of the third day, they beheld the sun go down upon a shoreless horizon, they broke forth into clamorous turbulence. Fortunately, however, the manifestations of neighboring land were such on the following day as no longer to admit a doubt. Besides a quantity of fresh weeds such as grow in rivers, they saw a green fish of a kind which keeps about rocks; then a branch of thorn with berries on it, and recently separated from the tree, floated by them. Then they picked up a reed, a small board, and above all, a staff artificially carved. All gloom and mutiny now gave way to sanguine expectation, and throughout the day each one was eagerly on the watch in hopes of being the first to discover the long-sought-for land."

4. *The Discovery.*—"The greatest animation prevailed throughout the ships; not an eye was

closed that night. As the evening darkened, Columbus took his station on the top of the castle cabin on the high poop of his vessel. However he might carry a cheerful and confident countenance during the day, it was to him a time of the most painful anxiety; and now when he was wrapped from observation by the shades of night, he maintained an intense and unremitting watch, ranging his eye along the dusky horizon in search of the most vague indications of land. . . . They continued their course until two in the morning, when a gun from the Pinta gave the joyful signal of land. . . . The land was now clearly seen about two leagues distant, whereupon they took in sail and lay to, waiting impatiently for the dawn.

"The thoughts and feelings of Columbus in this little space of time must have been tumultuous and intense. At length, in spite of every difficulty and danger, he had accomplished his object. The great mystery of the ocean was revealed; his theory which had been the scoff of sages was triumphantly established; he had secured to himself a glory which must be as durable as the world itself."

5. *The Landing.*—"As they approached the

shores they were refreshed by the sight of the ample forests, which in those climates have extraordinary vegetation. They beheld fruits of tempting hue, but unknown kind, growing among the trees which overhung the shores. The purity and suavity of the atmosphere, the crystal transparency of the seas which bathe these islands, give them a wonderful beauty, and must have had their effect upon the susceptible feelings of Columbus. No sooner did he land than he threw himself upon his knees, kissed the earth, and returned thanks to God with tears of joy. His example was followed by the rest, whose hearts, indeed, overflowed with the same feelings of gratitude."

6. *The Natives.*—"The natives of the island, when at the dawn of day they had beheld the ships, with their sails set, hovering on their coast, had supposed them some monsters which had issued from the deep during the night. They had crowded to the beach and watched their movements with awful anxiety. Their veering about apparently without effort; the shifting and furling of their sails, resembling huge wings, filled them with astonishment. When they beheld their boats approach the

shore, and a number of strange beings clad in glittering steel, or raiment of various colors, landing upon the beach, they fled in affright to their woods. Finding, however, that there was no attempt to pursue nor molest them, they gradually recovered from their terror, and approached the Spaniards with great awe, frequently prostrating themselves on the earth and making signs of adoration. During the ceremonies of taking possession, they remained in timid admiration at the complexion, the beards, the shining armor, and splendid dress of the Spaniards. The Admiral particularly attracted their attention from his commanding height, his air of authority, his dress of scarlet, and the deference which was paid him by his companions—all of which pointed him out to be the commander. When they had still further recovered from their fears, they approached the Spaniards, touched their beards, and examined their hands and faces; admiring their whiteness. Columbus, pleased with their simplicity, their gentleness, and the confidence they reposed in beings who must have appeared to them so strange and formidable, suffered their scrutiny with perfect acquiescence. The wondering

savages were won by this benignity; they now supposed that the ships had sailed out of the crystal firmament which bounded their horizon, or that they had descended from above on their ample wings, and that these marvelous beings were inhabitants of the skies."

CHAPTER XXII.

MR. IRVING now indulged himself in another considerable vacation; and, for a year or so after dismissing his "Columbus" to the publisher, we discern but little activity of his pen except the completion of his "Conquest of Grenada," some revision of his "Columbus" for a second edition, and various interesting letters to his friends.

We find him also again in motion. Ever since coming to Madrid he had been hard at work, and had enjoyed but slight opportunities for excursions and sight-seeing in so interesting a country as Spain. He had, indeed, transiently visited Segovia, the Escurial, and Toledo, cities somewhat in the neighborhood of the capital; but he now contemplated more extensive travels, and determined to visit a few other and more distant localities, and such as were of historic interest.

Accordingly, in the early spring of 1828, in company with two friends, he started on a south-

ern tour, designing to visit some of the more interesting cities of Andalusia. His brother Peter, who had been with him at Madrid, was expecting to join the excursion, but increasing ill-health prevented the plan, and the brothers parted company—Peter leaving Madrid for Paris on the same day that Washington and his party left for the south. Their journey toward the Mediterranean was safe as well as deeply interesting. Crossing the Sierra Morena Mountains, they were delighted with the wild and romantic scenery through which they passed. Descending, they were charmed with the balmy air and beautiful scenery of Andalusia. During their transient stay at Cordova they regaled themselves with brief excursions among the neighboring mountains, clothed with aromatic shrubbery and glorious flowers. They saw the shining Guadalquivir winding through green and fertile plains, while in the far south rose the snowy summits of the Sierra Nevadas, the intervening landscape presenting a scene of loveliness that might vie with the enchanting vale of Cashmere itself. Thence, a few leagues bring them to Granada, so full of historical recollections, wherein, from his recent studies, he was so deeply

interested, and which he was so well prepared to appreciate. With a sort of ecstasy, Irving, as he approached the city, caught his first glimpse of the Alhambra bathed in the purple radiance of the evening sun. Here, with his traveling companions, he lingered for several days surveying the city and its environs. But with Irving the ancient palace of the Alhambra was the special point of interest. He seemed never weary of lingering amid the charming scenery here presented to view, and he writes enthusiastically of the "delicately ornamented walls, the aromatic groves mingling with the freshness and the enlivening sound of fountains and the runs of water, the retired baths bespeaking purity and refinement, the balconies and galleries open to the fresh mountain breeze, and overlooking the loveliest scenery of the valley of the Darro and the magnificent expanse of the vega." And he adds that it is "impossible to contemplate this delicious abode and not feel an admiration of this genius and the poetical spirit of those who first devised this earthly paradise." He delights to escape from the noise and turmoil of the city, and roam amid these groves and gardens of beauty, and along

the magnificent colonnades, and marble halls, and mouldering towers—his mind, the while, crowded with the historical associations that enwreathe themselves with every object that meets his eye.

Yet he cannot at present linger; and in a few days he is off for Malaga. The route is deeply interesting, yet laborious and fatiguing, lying sometimes amid savage scenes and a desolate country, now passing over stern mountain regions, and then again traversing little fertile and lovely vales locked up in mountain embraces, while at times the glorious Mediterranean would rise on the delighted vision like as when the retreating Greeks shouted, "The Sea, the Sea!" as the dark and heaving Euxine burst upon their view. Far away on the deep frequent sails were in sight, brilliant amid the sunshine, and sometimes away below them upon the sandy beach fishermen were drawing their nets with shouts and songs. "Our road at times," he writes, "wound along the face of vast promontories, where we rode along a path formed like a cornice, whence we looked down upon the surf beating upon the rocks at an immense distance below us;" and here and there a

cross would be erected at the road-side, designating the spot where some hapless traveler had been waylaid and murdered by prowling banditti.

No disaster, however, occurred to our travelers, and nine days of journeying brought them to Malaga. Here, also, they passed several days, receiving great attention and hospitality from the American Consul. Then, by way of the mountains of Ronda, they visited Gibraltar, where they were again overwhelmed with kindness and hospitality. Cadiz Irving pronounces one of the most beautiful of cities, whence, after a sojourn of two days, and taking leave of his traveling companions, he embarks by steam for Seville, distant sixty miles up the Guadalquivir. After a fine sail of twelve hours he reached the city, April 14, and thus concluded what he esteemed one of the most intensely interesting tours he had ever made. He deemed the Andalusians an admirable people, and was delighted with the country as well as its inhabitants. "They are further removed," he says, "from the rest of Europeans in their characteristics than any of the people of Spain that I have seen. They belong more to Africa in many of their traits

and habitudes; and when I am mingling among them in some of their old country towns, I can scarcely persuade myself that the expulsion of the Moors has been any thing more than nominal."

CHAPTER XXIII.

MR. IRVING had planned to remain several weeks at Seville for the purpose of finishing and preparing for the press his "Conquest of Granada." He lingered here, however, more than a year, spending six weeks of the summer months without the walls of the city. He had here as a companion a young Englishman in delicate health, Mr. John N. Hall, who had been his fellow-lodger also in the city. His sketches of his little suburban home are especially attractive. It was a lonely spot, about two miles from town, and the cottage was inclosed within a high wall, and the keeper locked them in at sunset for the night. In the rear of the cottage was a little garden full of orange and citron trees, with a porch overhung with grape-vines and jessamines. "The place," he writes, "suits me from its uninterrupted quiet. I pass my time here completely undisturbed, having no visits to pay or receive. It is a long time since I have been so tranquil, so completely in-

sulated, so free from the noises and distractions of the town, and I cannot tell you how much I relish it."

Further on we find similar contented musings and rational moralizings: 'We are great cheats to ourselves, and defraud ourselves out of a great portion of this our petty term of existence, filling it up with idle ceremonies and irksome occupations and unnecessary cares. By dint of passing our time in the distractions of a continual succession of society we lose all intimacy with what ought to be our best and most cherished society—*ourselves;* and by fixing our attention on the vapid amusements and paltry splendors of a town, we lose all perceptions of the serene and elevating pleasures and the magnificent spectacles presented us by Nature. What *seirce* in Madrid could repay me for a calm, delicious evening passed here among the old trees of the garden, in untroubled thought or unbroken reverie? or what splendor of ball-room or court itself can equal the glory of sunset or the serene magnificence of the moon and stars shining so clearly above me?"

During Mr. Irving's stay in this retirement he pens a letter to a young friend, whose ac-

quaintance he had made at Madrid — Prince Dolgorouki, Secretary of Legation to the Russian embassy there. So excellent are some sentiments of this letter, and so appropriate to multitudes of youth, that we cannot forbear presenting a single extract. "You repine at times," he writes, "at the futility of the gay and great world about you. The world is pretty much what we make it, and it will be filled up with nullities and trifles if we suffer them to occupy our attention. . . . Fix your attention on noble objects and noble purposes, and sacrifice all temporary and trivial things to their attainment. Consider every thing not as to its present importance and effect, but with relation to what it is to produce some time hence. . . . In society let what is merely amusing occupy but the waste moments of your leisure and the mere surface of your thoughts; cultivate such intimacies only as may ripen into lasting friendship or furnish your memory with valuable recollections. Above all, mark *one line* in which to excel, and bend all your thoughts and exertions to rise to eminence, or rather to advance toward perfection, in that *line*. In this way you will find your views gradually con-

verging toward one point instead of being distracted by a thousand objects."

About the middle of August Mr. Irving made a brief visit to Palos, the port from which Columbus sailed on his voyage of discovery to the western world. Here he viewed every spot memorable in connection with the great expedition, and inquired diligently into every thing relating to Columbus and his history. A fortnight after returning from this excursion himself and his companion sought a cooler residence on the shores of the bay of Cadiz, and about eight miles from the city. Here they occupied a little country-seat, bearing the pleasant name of *Cerillo*, crowning the summit of a hill, and commanding an extensive and charming prospect—Cadiz and its beautiful bay before them, and the mountains of Ronda towering aloft far away in the eastern horizon.

The "Conquest of Granada" was now finished, and the portion which was copied—about half the first volume—was immediately dispatched to London and New York for publication, and the remainder was to follow as fast as copied. The author also dispatched to England and this country his revised edition of

"Columbus." The copy-right of the "Conquest" for five years brought him $4,750 in New York, and 2,000 guineas at London for the permanent copy-right.

From the opening chapter of the "Conquest" we quote the description of the kingdom and city of Granada previous to the conquest, together with its people, military character and political position.

"This renowned kingdom, situated in the southern part of Spain, and washed on one side by the Mediterranean Sea, was traversed in every direction by sierras or chains of lofty and rugged mountains, naked, rocky, and precipitous, rendering it almost impregnable, but locking up within their sterile embraces deep, rich, and verdant valleys of prodigal fertility.

"In the center of the kingdom lay its capital, the beautiful city of Granada, sheltered, as it were, in the lap of the Sierra Nevada, or Snowy Mountains. Its houses, seventy thousand in number, covered two lofty hills with their declivities, and a deep valley between them, through which flowed the Duero. The streets were narrow, as is usual in Moorish and Arab

cities, but there were occasionally small squares and open places. The houses had gardens and interior courts set out with orange, citron, and pomegranate trees, and refreshed by fountains, so that as the edifices ranged above each other up the sides of the hills, they presented a delightful appearance of mingled grove and city. One of the hills was surmounted by the Alcazaba, a strong fortress commanding all that part of the city; the other by the Alhambra, a royal palace and warrior castle, capable of containing within its *alcazar* and towers a garrison of forty thousand men, but possessing also its harem, the voluptuous abode of the Moorish monarchs, laid out with courts and gardens, fountains, and baths, and stately halls decorated in the most costly style of oriental luxury. According to the Moorish tradition, the king who built this mighty and magnificent pile was skilled in the occult sciences, and furnished himself with the necessary funds by means of alchemy. Such was its lavish splendor that even at the present day the stranger, wandering through its silent courts and deserted halls, gazes with astonishment at gilded ceilings and fretted domes, the brilliancy and beauty of

which have survived the vicissitudes of war and the silent dilapidations of ages.

"The city was surrounded by high walls three leagues in circuit, furnished with twelve gates and a thousand and thirty towers. Its elevation above the sea, and the neighborhood of the Sierra Nevada crowned with perpetual snows, tempered the fervid rays of summer, so that while other cities were panting with the sultry and stifling heat of the dog-days, the most salubrious breezes played through the marble halls of Granada.

"The glory of the city, however, was its vega or plain, which spread out to a circumference of thirty-seven leagues, surrounded by lofty mountains, and was proudly compared to the famous plain of Damascus. It was a vast garden of delight, refreshed by numerous fountains, and by the silver windings of the Xenil. The labor and ingenuity of the Moors had diverted the waters of this river into thousands of rills and streams, and diffused them over the whole surface of the plain. Indeed they had wrought up this happy region to a wonderful degree of prosperity, and took a pride in decorating it as if it had been a favorite mistress. The hills were

clothed with orchards and vineyards, the valleys embroidered with gardens, and the wide plains covered with waving grain. Here were seen in profusion the orange, the citron, the fig, and pomegranate, with great plantations of mulberry-trees, from which was produced the finest silk. The vine clambered from tree to tree, the grapes hung in rich clusters about the peasant's cottage, and the groves were rejoiced by the perpetual song of the nightingale. In a word so beautiful was the earth, so pure the air, and so serene the sky of this delicious region, that the Moors imagined the paradise of their prophet to be situated in that part of the heaven which overhung the kingdom of Granada.

"Within this favored realm, so prodigally endowed, and so strongly fortified by nature, the Moslem wealth, valor, and intelligence which had once shed such luster over Spain, had gradually retired, and here they made their final stand. Granada had risen to splendor on the ruin of other Moslem kingdoms, but in so doing had become the sole object of Christian hostility, and had to maintain its very existence by the sword. The Moorish capital accordingly presented a singular scene of Asiatic luxury and

refinement, mingled with the glitter and the din of arms. Letters were still cultivated, philosophy and poetry had their schools and disciples, and the language spoken was said to be the most elegant Arabic. A passion for dress and ornament pervaded all ranks. That of the princesses and ladies of high rank, says Al Kattib, one of their own writers, was carried to a height of luxury and magnificence that bordered on delirium. They wore girdles and bracelets, and anklets of gold and silver wrought with exquisite art and delicacy, and studded with jacinths, chrysolites, emeralds, and other precious stones. They were fond of braiding and decorating their beautiful long tresses, or confining them in knots sparkling with jewels. They were finely formed, excessively fair, graceful in their manners, and fascinating in their conversation. 'When they smiled,' says Al Kattib, 'they displayed teeth of dazzling whiteness, and their breath was as the perfume of flowers.'

"The Moorish cavaliers, when not in armor, delight in dressing themselves in Persian style, in garments of wool, of silk, or cotton, of the finest texture, beautifully wrought with stripes of various colors. In winter they wore, as an

outer garment, the African cloak of Tunisian albornoz; but in the heat of summer they arrayed themselves in linen of spotless whiteness. The same luxury prevailed in their military equipments. Their armor was inlaid and chased with gold and silver. The sheaths of their cimeters were richly labored and enameled; the blades were of Damascus, bearing texts from the Koran, or martial and amorous mottoes; the belts were of golden filigree, studded with gems; their poniards of Fez, were wrought in the arabesque fashion; their lances bore gay banderoles; their horses were sumptuously caparisoned with housings of green and crimson velvet, wrought with silk, and enameled with gold and silver. All this warlike luxury of the youthful chivalry was encouraged by the Moorish kings, who ordained that no tax should be imposed on the gold and silver employed in these embellishments, and the same exception was extended to the bracelets and other ornaments worn by the fair dames of Granada.

"War was the normal state of Granada and its inhabitants. The common people were subject at any moment to be summoned to the field, and all the upper class was a brilliant

chivalry. The Christian princes, so successful in regaining the rest of the peninsula, found their triumphs checked at the mountain barriers of this kingdom. Every peak had its *atalaya* or watch-tower, ready to make its fire by night, or to send up its column of smoke by day, a signal of invasion at which the whole country was on the alert. To penetrate the defiles of this perilous country; to surprise a frontier fortress; or to make a foray into the vega and a hasty ravage within sight of the very capital, were among the most favorite and daring exploits of the Castilian chivalry. But they never pretended to hold the region thus ravaged; it was sack, burn, plunder, and away! and these desolating inroads were retaliated in kind by the Moorish cavaliers, whose greatest delight was a *tala*, or predatory excursion into the Christian territories beyond the mountains."

CHAPTER XXIV.

ABOUT this time Mr. Irving's London publisher, Mr. Murray, proposed to him the editorship of a new monthly magazine which he was intending to publish, and offered him a salary of five thousand dollars, besides a liberal compensation for any original articles of his own which he might be inclined to furnish. Mr. Murray also offered him one hundred guineas per article for any contributions to the Quarterly Review. Both of these offers were declined, the former for the reason that he was unwilling to enter into any permanent engagements that would prevent him from returning to his native country, which he was now longing to do; and he declined the offer for the Review articles, owing to its hostility to the United States.

About the first of November, Irving returned to Seville, where he shortly received a letter from his brother Peter at London, notifying him that some one in the United States was preparing an abridgment of his "History of Columbus,"

and urging him to forestall this undertaking, and himself to provide immediately such an abridgment. Realizing the importance of this matter, he at once entered upon the work, and completed it in nineteen days, making a book of about four hundred pages. A number of hands were employed in copying the manuscript, and in a little more than a month from the day of commencing it the work was on its way to America. He also forwarded a manuscript copy to his London publisher as a gratuity, who at once disposed of an entire edition of ten thousand copies as one of the volumes of his Family Library. At New York the abridgment was disposed of to the purchasers of the first unabridged edition, and the right of printing a second edition of the latter, together with the abridgment for five years, was sold to the same purchaser for six thousand dollars.

Shortly after Irving's return to Seville, he received news of the death of Mr. Hall, who had had been his fellow-lodger for the six months past, and to whom he had become very much attached, and whose death he very sincerely mourned. "It is a long while," he writes to a friend, "since I have lived in such domestic

intimacy with any one but my brother. I could not have thought that a mere stranger in so short a space of time could have taken such a hold upon my feelings."

In reviewing at its close the year 1828, Mr. Irving speaks of it as a year of much literary application, and one of the most tranquil of his life. The success of his "Columbus" had been greater than anticipated, and had given him hopes of executing something of greater permanence than what he could reasonably expect for his works of mere imagination; and he looked toward the future with a cheerful heart, especially as he now was anticipating a speedy return to his native country.

At the commencement of the year 1829 Mr. Irving was honored with a Diploma as Corresponding Member of the Royal Academy of History at Madrid. During the winter and beyond, he seems to be again resting upon his laurels. There is not much moving of his pen and no important undertaking is on hand. His correspondence indicates a longing for home, while yet he feels that the time to return has not yet arrived. He anticipates that a season of dissipation will inevitably follow his return,

when he would not for some time be able to resume any important literary labor. Hence he is anxious to have some such enterprise in progress so far that it can be carried forward in spite of any slight diversions or interruptions.

Nor does he seem in readiness to leave Spain, a country which, together with its people, had for Irving a special attraction. Thus, in a letter to his friend, Prince Dolgorouki, he writes, "I feel so attached to Spain that the thoughts of soon leaving it are extremely painful to me; and it will be gratifying to me to take a farewell view of some of its finest scenes in company with one who knows how to appreciate this noble country and noble people."

As may be inferred from the above extract, the two gentlemen had planned an excursion together to some of the more interesting cities of Spain, and about the middle of April, 1829, the Prince arrives at Seville from Madrid. On May-day the two travelers set off together, on horseback for Granada, when, after a pleasant journey of five days, they arrive safely. After a twelve days' sojourn at a hotel, they change their quarters for the Governor's vacant apart-

ments in the palace of the Alhambra. Here, as may well be supposed, Mr. Irving was in his element, and was accommodated in accordance with his heart's best wishes. It appears that they had obtained permission from the Governor to occupy one or two of his own apartments; "and you may easily imagine," he writes to his brother Peter, "how delightfully we are lodged, with the whole pile at our command, to ramble over its halls and courts at all hours of day and night without control. The part we inhabit is intended for the Governor's quarters; but he prefers at present residing down in the city. We have an excellent old dame, and her good humored, bright-eyed niece, who have charge of the Alhambra, who arrange our rooms, meals, etc., with the assistance of a tall servant-boy; and thus we live, quietly, snugly, and without any restraint, elevated above the world and its troubles."

In a few days Prince Dolgorouki sets off to pursue his travels through Andalusia; and Irving seems to have been left in sole possession of the palace. He writes of feeling at first somewhat "lonely and doleful." For a time the weather was wet and cold, and there was a

cheerless aspect around those marble and lofty halls. But pleasant weather and balmy sunshine came at length, and restored all the charms of the Alhambra. Soon, also, he is again at work among his books and manuscripts, and becomes busy and cheerful. "I breakfast," says he, "in the saloons of the embassadors, or among the flowers and fountains in the Court of the Lions; and when I am not occupied with my pen I lounge with my book about these oriental apartments, or stroll about the courts and gardens and arcades, by day or night, with no one to interrupt me. It absolutely appears to me like a dream, or as if I am spell-bound in some fairy palace."

On the 10th of June Irving finished his work entitled "Legends of the Conquest of Spain," a production which was not published till several years afterward. About the same time he received notice of his appointment as "Secretary of Legation to London"—a piece of intelligence which seems to have given him but little pleasure, as such an office would probably interfere very seriously with all his literary plans. "I confess," he writes to a friend, "I feel extremely reluctant to give up my quiet

and independent mode of life, and am excessively perplexed. There are many private reasons that urge me on, independent of the wishes of my friends, while my antipathy to the bustle there, and business of the world, incline me to hold back. I only regret that I have not been left entirely alone, and to dream away life in my own way."

This appointment, as may well be guessed, was brought about through the agency of certain friends at home, and on his part was neither sought for nor desired. He was now entirely absorbed in literary plans and enterprises, and in this line of effort he had settled down as to his life-work, and deprecated every interference with it for any extraneous purpose. After deciding to accept the appointment, he determined, however, that should he find the office irksome in any respect, or detrimental to his literary plans, he would at once throw it up, being happily independent of it, "both as to circumstances and as to ambition." Sentiments entirely similar he expresses to Mr. Everett, alleging that the office was unsought whether by himself or his relatives; that he had no inclination for office, and was doubtful that he had

any turn for it ; that his recluse literary life had well-nigh unfitted him for worldly business and bustle, and he had no political ambition to be gratified. He seems to have accepted the office more to please his friends than himself, determined, however, that as the place was unsought and undesired by him, so, in accepting it, he would commit himself to no set of men or measures, but, as heretofore, keep himself as clear as possible of all party politics, and continue to devote all his spare time to general literature.

CHAPTER XXV.

AFTER nearly three months of delightful residence at the Alhambra, Mr. Irving, about the last of July, commenced his journey toward England. His departure was to him like leaving a safe and tranquil port to embark upon a stormy and treacherous sea. Time with him had passed there as in a kind of oriental dream. "Never shall I meet on earth with an abode so much to my taste, or so suited to my habits and pursuits. The sole fault was that the softness of the climate, the silence and serenity of the place, the odor of flowers and the murmur of fountains, had a soothing and voluptuous effect that at times almost incapacitated me for work, and made me feel like the Knight of Industry when so pleasingly inthralled in the Castle of Indolence."

He was accompanied by a young Englishman, an educated gentleman, who was on his way homeward. They traveled as far as to

Valencia in a sort of horse-cart, in which they could sit or recline at pleasure; and, where the roads were pleasant, they walked extensively. Their progress toward Valencia averaged about thirty miles a day, the route lying through Murcia, Orchuela, and Alicante. He describes the country embracing these localities as highly romantic and delightful, level as a table, and a vast garden land, covered for many leagues with groves of oranges, citrons, pomegranates, palms, and dates, bordered in the distance by towering mountains, picturesque in outline, and sublime from their very nakedness and sterility. A part of their route was infested by robbers, but the travelers escaped disturbance or harm, and came in eleven or twelve days to Valencia. After a day or two the travelers took the diligence for Barcelona. Here Mr. Irving was detained several days by the sickness of Mr. Snead, his fellow-traveler, after which they set out for France, Mr. S. being still feeble; yet such was his anxiety to reach home that they traveled nine days and nights incessantly until they reached Paris. All this was too much for the unfortunate young gentleman, and he died shortly after reaching home. It seemed a spe-

cially melancholy death, as he was a young man of fortune and brilliant prospects, and was about to be married. "The scenes," says Irving, "I had with his afflicted parents are too painful to be repeated."

After remaining a fortnight at Paris with his brother Peter he proceeded to London, from which he had been absent between five and six years. He soon became established in his secretaryship, and the following note to his brother Peter at Paris seems to indicate that he had begun to be considerably reconciled to his new position: "I feel disposed, now that I am in diplomatic life, to give it some little trial. The labors are not great, especially in my present situation. It introduces me to scenes and affairs of high interest, and in that way, perhaps, prepares me for higher intellectual labors. The very kind and flattering manner, also, in which I am treated in all circles is highly gratifying."

His lodgings were immediately opposite the Legation, the office of which was very comfortable and entirely at his command. His duties were comparatively light, while his social position and relations were, of course, all he could desire. Meanwhile the avails of his works

published in London and New York had already secured to him a competence, so that he was no longer under any necessity of writing for bread.

Under these pleasant circumstances he pens the following sunny note to Peter: "My idea is not to *drudge* at literary labor, but to use it as an agreeable employment. We have now sufficient funds to insure us a decent support should we choose to retire upon them. We may, therefore, indulge in the passing pleasures of life, and mingle amusement with our labors."

Mr. Irving was at this early period contemplating as his great work and crowning labor, a life of Washington, an enterprise, however, which was destined to be deferred for many years.

Two other literary honors were now awaiting him: the first, one of the two medals of the Royal Society of Literature adjudged annually to the authors of literary works of eminent merit or of important literary discoveries; the other honor was that of the degree of LL.D., conferred on him by the University of Oxford. On this occasion, advancing in the presence of the great audience to receive his diploma, he

was assailed with prolonged and laughable greetings from the students, shouting Diedrich Knickerbocker, Ichabod Crane, Rip Van Winkle, Geoffrey Crayon, Columbus, Sketch-Book, Bracebridge Hall, etc. He was quite overcome by such a volley of salutations, and was laboring meanwhile with suppressed laughter at the unexpected and vociferous applause.

The modesty of Irving is said to have prevented him from ever making use of his honorable title, and from so honorable a source. He was accustomed to view it as a learned dignity urged upon him against his own judgment.

CHAPTER XXVI.

HAVING been a year in his secretaryship, we find Mr. Irving putting to press his "Voyages of the Companions of Columbus."* At the same time he was employed upon his Alhambra tales, several of which he had already finished. He begins, however, to feel sensibly the trammels connected with his official position, and complains that he has no time for any thing. "I feel my situation," he says, "a terrible sacrifice of pleasure, profit, and literary reputation without furnishing any recompense."

It is not strange that with such feelings as these Irving should be inclined to seize the first opportunity to retire from his office. Accordingly in September, 1831, he was released, after having served two years at the Legation.

The remainder of the year he seems to have devoted to visiting his Birmingham relations,

* This work of Irving seems to have been designed as a sort of appendage to his Columbus. It comprised an account of voyages undertaken by several distinguished navigators soon after the first discovery by Columbus.

and excursions to various other interesting places. Among these last was Newstead Abbey,* once the possession and seat of Lord Byron. Meanwhile he was busy in finishing and correcting some manuscripts, complaining, however, of restlessness and uncertainty of mind and feelings tending to interference with imaginative writing.

The "Alhambra," which had been for some time on hand, was put to press in the ensuing spring, and, as usual, at New York and London. The London publisher paid about $5,000 for the manuscript, and at New York he received $3,000 for the privilege of printing 5,500 copies. Also for his "Voyages" above mentioned he received at London $2,600, and at New York $1,500 for 3,000 copies.

Mr. Irving now made diligent preparation for

* The former seat of Lord Byron, who, by stress of circumstances, was obliged to part with it, to his very great regret. It was purchased by a devoted friend of the bard, who expended large sums to put the old abbey in complete repair. Irving writes in 1831, about the time he visited it, that "It is a most ancient, curious, and beautiful pile, of great extent and intricacy, and, when restored, will be one of the finest specimens of the mingled conventual and baronial buildings in England. Every thing relative to Lord Byron is preserved with the most scrupulous care. The bedroom he occupied, with all its furniture as it stood, many of his books, his boxing gloves, etc."

returning to the United States, and, embarking at Havre April 11, he arrived at New York after a passage of forty days.

As might be supposed, he met a most cordial reception, and rejoiced greatly as, after an absence of seventeen years, he touched again the soil of his native city. In a letter to his brother Peter, whom he left behind him in Europe, he writes, "I have been absolutely overwhelmed with the welcomes and felicitations of my friends. It seems as if all the old *standers* of the city had called on me; and I am continually in the midst of old associates who, thank God! have borne the wear and tear of seventeen years surprisingly, and are all in good health, good looks, and good circumstances. . . . I have been in a tumult of enjoyment ever since my arrival, am pleased with every thing and every body, and as happy as mortal being can be."

A public dinner was accorded to him in New York, attended by the *élite* of the city, which was presided over by Chancellor Kent, and was a most deeply interesting occasion. Public dinners were also proffered him at Philadelphia and Baltimore, both of which, however, he declined.

After his arrival home Mr. Irving devoted several weeks to various visits and excursions. He takes an early opportunity to visit Washington, to pay his respects to the Government he had, for a brief period, been serving abroad. Mr. M'Lean, with whom he was associated at London, was now Secretary of the Treasury, with whom and his family, Irving spent some delightful days, and was received most cordially by all the family, great and small. He also called on the President, (Jackson,) with whom he seems to have been "much pleased as well as amused," and who hinted to his visitor that he might want him for another place under the Government. But Irving gave him to understand clearly that he desired no further public responsibilities; and he seems at this time to be entirely settled in his mind to an exclusively literary life.

In the course of the summer we track him up the Hudson—at West Point, the Highlands, Tarrytown, Saratoga, Trenton Falls, and the White Mountains. Every-where he is full of animation and delight, and tells his brother Peter, over the sea, of the pleasant times he is having. "In fact, I return to all the simple enjoy-

ments of old times with the renovated feelings of a school-boy, and have had more hearty, home-bred delights of the kind since my return to the United States than I have ever had in the same space of time in the whole course of my life."

The autumn he devoted to a tour to the Far West, in company with commissioners appointed by Government to treat with deputations of different tribes of Indians. This tour took him into the territory lying west of Arkansas, and appropriated to the Indian tribes. The journey westward from St. Louis was mainly on horseback, and beyond the frontiers they encamped out at night, while their subsistence was by the wild game of the forest and prairie. He describes his tour as very rough, but interesting and pleasing, the travelers leading, as they went, a hunter's life, camping by streams and sleeping on skins or blankets in the open air, enjoying high health and exuberant spirits. His return was by way of steamboat down the Arkansas and Mississippi to New Orleans, and thence, by stage, through the States to Washington, where he passed the winter very pleasantly with his friends the M'Leans. Here he became intensely inter-

ested in the great Nullification debates then going forward. "I became," he says, "so deeply interested in the debates of Congress that I almost lived at the Capitol. The grand debate in the Senate occupied my mind for three weeks as did ever a dramatic representation. I heard about every speech, good and bad, and did not lose a word of any of the best." He afterward adds, "I think my close attendance on the legislative halls has given me an acquaintance with the nature and operation of our institutions, and the character and concerns of the various parts of the Union, that I could not have learned from books for years."

Leaving Washington for New York, we find him detained three weeks at Baltimore, enthralled in the abundant hospitality of the city, "going the round of dinners," he says, "until as jaded as I was in London. Time and mind are cut up with me like chopped hay, and I am good for nothing, and shall be good for nothing for some time to come, so much am I harassed by the claims of society."

Thus, amid his various travels, excursions, and visitings, more than a year seems to have passed, after his arrival from abroad, before Mr.

Irving could seriously set himself to work with his pen. In the meantime he again incurred some serious pecuniary reverse, which, however, disturbed him but slightly, as he had an abundance remaining. During the second winter after his return from abroad, he was again diligently at his literary labors and progressing therein satisfactorily. He was domiciled in the family of his brother Ebenezer, and managed to keep himself clear of evening engagements and dinner parties, and thus was enabled to improve the winter to the utmost.

We subjoin here a single extract from the "Companions of Columbus." It relates to the discovery of the Pacific Ocean by Vasco Nunez.

"'Why,' said the young cacique, 'should you quarrel for such a trifle? If this gold is indeed so precious in your eyes that for it alone you abandon your homes, invade the peaceful lands of others, and expose yourselves to such sufferings and perils, I will tell you of a region where you may gratify your wishes to the utmost. Behold these lofty mountains; beyond these lies a mighty sea which may be discerned from their summit. It is navigated by people who have vessels almost as large as yours, and

furnished like them with sails and oars. All the streams which flow down from the southern side of these mountains into that sea abound in gold, and the Kings who reign upon its borders eat and drink out of golden vessels. Gold, in fact, is as plentiful and common among these people of the South as iron is among Spaniards.' . . .

"The day had scarce dawned when Vasco Nunez and his followers set forth from the Indian village and began to climb the height. It was a severe and rugged toil for one so way-worn; but they were filled with new ardor at the idea of the triumphant scene that was so soon to repay them for all hardships. About ten o'clock in the morning they emerged from the thick forests through which they had hitherto struggled, and arrived at a lofty and airy region of the mountain. The bold summit alone remained to be ascended, and their guides pointed to a moderate eminence from which the southern sea was visible.

"Upon this Vasco Nunez commanded his followers to halt, and that no man should stir from his place. Then, with a palpitating heart, he ascended alone the bare mountain-top. On

reaching the summit the long-desired prospect burst upon his view. It was as if a new world were unfolded to him, separated from all hitherto known by this mighty barrier of mountains. Below him extended a vast chaos of rock and forest, and green savannas and wandering streams; while at a distance the waters of the promised ocean glittered in the morning sun.

"At this glorious prospect Vasco Nunez sank upon his knees, and poured out thanks to God for being the first European to whom it was given to make that great discovery. He then called his people to ascend. 'Behold, my friends,' said he, 'that glorious sight which we have so much desired. Let us give thanks to God that he has granted us this great honor and advantage.'"

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE "Alhambra" met a most cordial reception from every quarter, and received much praise at home and abroad. Edward Everett, in the "North American Review," considered the work as being equal in literary value to any of the author's other works, except the "Sketch Book;" while Mr. Prescott, in his "Ferdinand and Isabella," pronounces it the "beautiful Spanish Sketch Book."

The author's sketch of his journey from Seville to Granada is highly instructive as well as interesting, presenting to us, as it does, so picturesque a view of Spanish scenery, mode of traveling, etc. "Many," he writes, "are apt to picture Spain to their imaginations as a soft southern region, decked out with all the luxurious charms of voluptuous Italy. On the contrary, though there are exceptions in some of the maritime provinces, yet for the greater part it is a stern, melancholy country, with rugged mountains and long, naked, sweeping plains

destitute of trees, and invariably silent and lonesome, partaking of the savage and solitary character of Africa. What adds to this silence and loneliness is the absence of singing birds, a natural consequence of the want of groves and hedges. The vulture and the eagle are seen wheeling about the mountain cliffs, and soaring over the plains, and groups of shy bustards stalk about the heaths; but the myriads of smaller birds which animate the whole face of other countries are met with in but few provinces of Spain, and in them chiefly among the orchards and gardens which surround the habitations of man.

"In the exterior provinces the traveler occasionally traverses great tracts cultivated with grain as far as the eye can reach, waving at times with verdure, at other times naked and sunburnt; but he looks round in vain for the hand that has tilled the soil. At length he perceives some village perched on a steep hill or rugged crag, with moldering battlements and ruined watch-tower, a stronghold in old times against civil war or Moorish inroad; for the custom among the peasantry of congregating together for mutual protection is still kept

up in most parts of Spain in consequence of the maraudings of roving freebooters.

"But a great part of Spain is deficient in the garniture of groves and forests, and the softer charms of ornamental cultivation, yet its scenery has something of a high and lofty character to compensate the want. It partakes something of the attributes of its people, and I think that I better understand the proud, hardy, frugal, and abstemious Spaniard, his manly defiance of hardships and contempt of effeminate indulgence, since I have seen the country he inhabits.

"There is something, too, in the stern and simple features of the Spanish landscape that impresses on the soul a feeling of sublimity. The immense plains of the Castiles and La Mancha, extending as far as the eye can reach, derive an interest from their very nakedness and immensity, and have something of the solemn grandeur of the ocean. In ranging over these boundless wastes the eye catches sight here and there of a straggling herd of cattle attended by a lonely herdsman, motionless as a statue, with his long, slender pike tapering up like a lance into the air; or beholds a long

train of mules slowly moving along the waste like a train of camels in a desert; or a single herdsman, armed with blunderbuss and stiletto, prowling over the plain. Thus the country, the habits, the very looks of the people, have something of the Arabian character. The general insecurity of the country is evinced in the universal use of weapons. The herdsman in the field, the shepherd in the plain, has his musket and his knife. The wealthy villager rarely ventures to the market-town without his trabucho, and, perhaps, a servant on foot with a blunderbuss on his shoulder; and the most petty journey is undertaken with the preparations of a warlike enterprise.

"The dangers of the road produce also a mode of traveling resembling, on a diminutive scale, the caravans of the East. The arrieros, or carriers, congregate in troops, and set off in large and well-armed trains on appointed days, while individual travelers swell their number and contribute to their strength. In this primitive way is the commerce of the country carried on. The muleteer is the general medium of traffic and the legitimate wanderer of the land, traversing the Peninsula from the Pyrenees and the

Asturias to the Alpuxarras, the Serrania de Ronda, and even to the gates of Gibraltar. He lives frugally and hardily. His alforjas (or saddle-bags) of coarse cloth hold his scanty stock of provisions, a leathern bottle hanging at his saddle-bow contains wine or water for a supply across barren mountains and thirsty plains, a mule-cloth spread upon the ground is his bed at night, and his pack-saddle is his pillow. His low but clear-limbed and sinewy form betokens strength; his complexion is dark and sunburnt, his eye resolute, but quiet in its expression, except when kindled by sudden emotion; his demeanor is frank, manly, and courteous, and he never passes you without a grave salutation: 'God guard you! God be with you, cavalier!'

"As these men have often their whole fortune at stake upon the burden of their mules, they have their weapons at hand, slung to their saddles, and ready to be snatched down for desperate defense. But their united numbers render them secure against petty bands of marauders, and the solitary bandalero, (robber,) armed to the teeth, and mounted on his Andalusian steed, hovers about them like a pirate

about a merchant convoy, without daring to make an assault. . . .

"It has a most picturesque effect, also, to meet a train of muleteers in some mountain pass. First you hear the bells of the leading mules breaking with their simple melody the stillness of the airy height, or perhaps the voice of the muleteer admonishing some tardy or wandering animal, or chanting at the full stretch of his lungs some traditionary ballad. At length you see the mules slowly winding along the craggy defile, sometimes descending precipitous cliffs, so as to present themselves in full relief against the sky, sometimes toiling up the deep arid chasms below you. As they approach you descry their gay decorations of worsted tufts, tassels, and saddle-cloths; while, as they pass by, the ever-ready trabucho, slung behind their packs and saddles, gives a hint of the insecurity of the road.

"The ancient kingdom of Granada, into which we are about to penetrate, is one of the most mountainous regions of Spain. Vast sierras, or chains of mountains, destitute of shrub or tree and mottled with variegated marbles and granites, elevate their sun-burnt

summits against a deep blue sky, yet in their rugged bosoms lie engulfed the most verdant and fertile valleys, where the desert and the garden strive for mastery, and the very rock, as it were, is compelled to yield the fig, the orange, and the citron, and to blossom with the myrtle and the rose. In the wild passes of these mountains the sight of walled towns and villages, built like eagles' nests among the cliffs, and surrounded by Moorish battlements, or of ruined watch-towers perched on lofty peaks, carry the mind back to the chivalrous days of Christian and Moslem warfare, and to the romantic struggle for the conquest of Granada. In traversing these lofty sierras the traveler is often obliged to alight and lead his horse up and down the steep and jagged ascents and descents, resembling the broken steps of a staircase. Sometimes the road winds along dizzy precipices, without parapet to guard him from the gulfs below, and then will plunge down steep and dark and dangerous declivities. Sometimes it struggles through rugged barancos, or ravines, worn by water-torrents, the obscure paths of the contrabandista, (smugglers;) while ever and anon the ominous cross,

the memento of robbery and murder, erected on a mound of stones at some lonely part of the road, admonishes the traveler that he is among the haunts of banditti, perhaps at that very moment under the eye of some lurking bandalero. Sometimes in winding through the narrow valleys he is startled by a hoarse bellowing, and beholds above him on some green fold of the mountain side a herd of fierce Andalusian bulls destined for the combat of the arena. There is something awful in the contemplation of these terrible animals, clothed with tremendous strength, and ranging their native pastures in untamed wildness, strangers almost to the face of man. They know no one but the solitary herdsman who attends upon them, and even he at times dares not venture to approach them. The low bellowings of these bulls, and their menacing aspect as they look down from their rocky height, give additional wildness to the savage scenery around."

On reaching Granada and entering the palace of the Alhambra, and walking meditatively amid its ancient halls, he feels himself to be treading upon haunted ground, while romantic associations cluster thickly around him.

"From earliest boyhood, when, on the banks of the Hudson, I first pored over the pages of an old Spanish story about the wars of Granada, that city has ever been a subject of my waking dreams, and often have I trod in fancy the romantic halls of the Alhambra. Behold, for once, a day-dream realized! yet I can scarcely credit my senses, or believe that I do indeed inhabit the palace of Boabdil, and look down from its balconies upon chivalric Granada. As I loiter through the oriental chambers, and hear the murmuring of fountains and the song of the nightingales, as I inhale the odor of the rose and feel the influence of the balmy climate, I am almost tempted to fancy myself in the paradise of Mahomet, and that the plump little Dolores* is one of the bright-eyed houris, destined to administer to the happiness of true believers."

The author's selection of his chamber at the palace is curious as well as characteristic:

"On taking up my abode in the Alhambra, one end of a suite of empty chambers of modern architecture, intended for the residence of the governor, was fitted up for my reception. It

* A little maid-servant of the palace.

was in front of the palace, looking forth upon the esplanade. The farther end communicated with a cluster of little chambers, partly Moorish, partly modern, inhabited by Fia Antonia* and her family. . . . I was dissatisfied with being lodged in a modern and frontier apartment of the palace, and longed to ensconce myself in the very heart of the building.

"As I was rambling one day about the Moorish halls, I found, in a remote gallery, a door which I had not before noticed, communicating apparently with an extensive apartment locked up from the public. Here, then, was a mystery. Here was the haunted wing of the castle. I procured the key, however, without difficulty. The door opened to a range of vacant chambers of European architecture, though built over a Moorish arcade along the little garden of Lindaraxa. There were two lofty rooms, the ceilings of which were of deep panel work of cedar, richly and skillfully carved with fruits and flowers intermingled with grotesque masks or faces, but broken in many places. The walls had evidently in ancient times been hung with damask, but were now naked, and scrawled over with the

* The mistress or housekeeper at the palace.

insignificant names of aspiring travelers. The windows, which were dismantled and open to wind and weather, looked into the garden of Lindaraxa, and the orange and citron trees flung their branches into the chambers. . . . There was something in the very decay that enhanced the interest of the scene, speaking, as it did, of that mutability which is the irrevocable lot of man and all his works. . . . I determined at once to take up my abode in this apartment.

"My determination excited great surprise in the family,* who could not imagine any rational inducement for the choice of so solitary, remote, and forlorn an apartment. The good Fia Antonia considered it highly dangerous. The neighborhood, she said, was infested by vagrants; the caverns of the adjacent hills swarmed with gipsies; the palace was ruinous, and easy to be entered in many parts; and the rumor of a stranger quartered alone in one of the ruined apartments, out of the hearing of the rest of the inhabitants, might tempt unwelcome visitors in the night, especially as foreigners are always supposed to be well stocked with money. Dolores represented the frightful loneliness of the

* The housekeeper's family.

place, nothing but bats and owls flitting about; then there were a fox and a wild cat that kept about the vaults, and roamed about at night.

"I was not to be diverted from my humor; so, calling in the assistance of a carpenter, the doors and windows were soon placed in a state of tolerable security.

"With all these precautions, I must confess the first night I passed in these quarters was inexpressibly dreary. I was escorted by the whole family to my chamber, and their taking leave of me and retiring along the waste antechamber and echoing galleries reminded me of those hobgoblin stories where the hero is left to accomplish the adventure of a haunted house."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

AT the beginning of the year 1835 Mr. Irving commenced the plan of publishing a series of volumes under the general title of "Miscellanies," comprising various manuscripts which he already had on hand, and others yet to be prepared. The first of these was his "Tour on the Prairies;" an account of the expedition, already noticed, to the Indian country. This work was published in the following spring in this country and England. Edward Everett, noticing this book in the North American Review, remarks that he was hardly able to say to what class of compositions it properly belonged. "It can scarcely," he says, "be called a book of travels, for there is too much painting of manners and scenery, and too little statistics; it is not a novel, for there is no story; and it is not a romance, for it is all true. It is a sort of sentimental journey, a romantic excursion, in which nearly all the elements of several different kinds of writing are beautifully and gayly blended

into a production almost *sui generis*." The reviewer adds in his conclusion: "The American father who can afford it, and does not buy a copy of Mr. Irving's book, does not deserve that his sons should prefer his fireside to the bar-room, the pure and chaste pleasures of a cultivated taste, to the gross indulgences of sense; he does not deserve that his daughters should prefer to pass their leisure hours in maidenly seclusion and the improvement of their minds, rather than to flaunt on the side-walks by day, and pursue by night an eternal round of tasteless dissipation."

Writing of the prairie Indians and their horses, Mr. Irving says: "The habits of the Arabs seem to have come with the steed. The introduction of the horse on the boundless prairies of the Far West changed the whole mode of living of their (Indian) inhabitants. It gave them that facility of rapid motion, and of sudden and distant change of place, so dear to the roving propensities of man. Instead of lurking in the depths of gloomy forests, and patiently threading the mazes of a tangled wilderness on foot, like his brethren of the North, the Indian of the West is a rover of the plain; he leads a

brighter and more sunshiny life, almost always on horseback on vast flowery prairies and under cloudless skies."

As they journey, one of their attendants, a half-breed Indian, Beatte by name, pursues, catches, and subdues one of the wild horses of the prairie.

"As he was returning to the camp he came upon a gang of six horses, which immediately made for the river. He pursued them across the stream, left his rifle on the river bank, and, putting his horse to full speed, soon came up with the fugitives. He attempted to noose one of them, but the lariat hitched on one of his ears and he shook it off. The horses dashed up a hill, he followed hard at their heels, when, of a sudden, he saw their tails whisking in the air, and they plunging down a precipice. It was too late to stop. He shut his eyes, held in his breath, and went over with them—neck or nothing. The descent was between twenty and thirty feet, but they all came down safe upon a sandy bottom.

"He now succeeded in throwing his noose round a fine young horse. As he galloped along side of him the two horses passed each

side of a sapling, and the end of the lariat was jerked out of his hand. He regained it, but an intervening tree obliged him again to let it go. Having once more caught it, and coming to a more open country, he was enabled to play the young horse with the line until he gradually checked and subdued him, so as to lead him to the place where he had left his rifle.

"He had another formidable difficulty in getting him across the river, where both horses stuck for a time in the mire, and Beatte was nearly unseated from his saddle by the force of the current and the struggles of his captive. After much toil and trouble, however, he got across the stream, and brought his prize safe into the camp. . . .

"Beatte, just as we were about to march, strapped a light pack upon his back, by way of giving him the first lesson in servitude. The native pride and independence of the animal took fire at this indignity. He reared, and plunged, and kicked, and tried in every way to get rid of the degrading burden. The Indian was too potent for him. At every paroxysm he renewed the discipline of the halter, until the

poor animal, driven to despair, threw himself prostrate on the ground and lay motionless, as if acknowledging himself vanquished. A stage hero, representing the despair of a captive prince, could not have played his part more dramatically. There was absolutely a moral grandeur in it.

"The imperturbable Beatte folded his arms, and stood for a time looking down in silence upon his captive, until, seeing him perfectly subdued, he nodded his head slowly, screwed his mouth into a sardonic smile of triumph, and with a jerk of the halter ordered him to rise. He obeyed, and from that time forward offered no resistance. During that day he bore his pack patiently, and was led by the halter; but in two days he followed voluntarily at large among the supernumerary horses of the troop.

"I could not but look with compassion upon this fine young animal, whose whole course of existence had been so suddenly reversed. From being a denizen of these vast pastures, ranging at will from plain to plain and mead to mead, cropping of every herb and flower, and drinking of every stream, he was suddenly reduced to perpetual and painful servitude, to pass his life

under the harness and the curb, amid, perhaps, the din and dust and drudgery of cities. The transition in his lot was such as sometimes take place in human affairs and in the fortunes of towering individuals; one day a prince of the prairies, the next day a pack-horse!"

Mr. Irving and one of his companions had made an unsuccessful attempt at buffalo-hunting but were not entirely discouraged.

"We determined not to seek the camp until we had made one more effort. Casting our eyes about the surrounding waste, we descried a herd of buffalo about two miles distant, scattered apart, and quietly grazing near a small strip of trees and bushes. It required but little stretch of fancy to picture them, so many cattle grazing on the edge of a common, and that the grove might shelter some lowly farm-house.

"We now formed our plan to circumvent the herd, and by getting on the other side of them, to hunt them in the direction where we knew our camp to be situated, otherwise the pursuit might take us to such a distance as to render it impossible for us to find our way back before night-fall. Taking a wide circuit, therefore, we moved slowly and cautiously, pausing occasion-

ally when we saw any of the herd desist from grazing. The wind fortunately set from them, otherwise they might have scented us and have taken the alarm. In this way we succeeded in getting round the herd without disturbing it. It consisted of about forty head, bulls, cows, and calves. Separating to some distance from each other, we now approached slowly in a parallel line, hoping by degrees to steal near without exciting attention. They began, however, to move off quietly, stopping at every step to graze; when suddenly a bull that, unobserved by us, had been taking his siesta under a clump of trees to our left, roused himself from his lair and hastened to join his companions. We were still at a considerable distance, but the game had taken the alarm. We quickened our pace, they broke into a gallop, and now commenced a full chase.

"As the ground was level they shouldered along with great speed, following each other in a line, two or three bulls bringing up the rear, the last of whom, from his enormous size and venerable frontlet, and beard of sun-burnt hair, looked like the patriarch of the herd, and as if he might long have reigned the monarch of the prairie.

"There is a mixture of the awful and the comic in the look of these huge animals as they bear their great bulk forward, with an up and down motion of unwieldy head and shoulders; their tail cocked up like the queue of Pantaloon in a pantomime, the end whisking about in a fierce yet whimsical style, and their eyes glaring venomously with an expression of fright and fury.

"For some time I kept parallel with the line, without being able to force my horse within pistol shot, so much had he been alarmed by the assault of the buffalo in the preceding chase. At length I succeeded, but was again balked by my pistols missing fire. My companions, whose horses were less fleet and more way-worn, could not overtake the herd; at length Mr. L., who was in the rear of the line and losing ground, leveled his double-barreled gun, and fired a long raking shot. It struck a buffalo just above the loins, broke its backbone, and brought it to the ground. He stopped, and alighted to dispatch his prey, when, borrowing his gun, which had yet a charge remaining in it, I put my horse to his speed, again overtook the herd which was thundering along, pursued by the Count. With my present weapon there was no need of urging my horse

to such close quarters; galloping along parallel, therefore, I singled out a buffalo, and by a fortunate shot brought it down on the spot. The ball had struck a vital part; it would not move from the place where it fell, but lay there struggling in mortal agony, while the rest of the herd kept on their headlong career across the prairie.

"Dismounting, I now fettered my horse to prevent his straying, and advanced to contemplate my victim. I am nothing of a sportsman; I had been tempted to this unwonted exploit by the magnitude of the game, and the excitement of an adventurous chase. Now that the excitement was over I could not but look with commiseration upon the poor animal that lay struggling and bleeding at my feet. His very size and importance, which had before inspired me with eagerness, now increased my compunction. It seemed as if I had inflicted pain in proportion to the bulk of my victim, and as if there were a hundredfold greater waste of life than would have been in the destruction of an animal of an inferior size."

Mr. Irving presents us a sketch of the "Prairie dogs," and one of their villages:

"The prairie dog is an animal of the coney kind, and about the size of the rabbit. He is of a sprightly, mercurial nature; quick, sensitive, and somewhat petulant. He is very gregarious, living in large communities, sometimes of several acres in extent, where innumerable little heaps of earth show the entrance to the subterranean cells of the inhabitants; and the well-beaten tracks, like lanes and streets, show their mobility and restlessness. According to the accounts given of them they would seem to be continually full of sport, business, and public affairs, whisking about hither and thither, as if on gossiping visits to each other's houses, or congregating in the cool of the evening, or after a shower, and gamboling together in the open air. Sometimes, especially when the moon shines, they pass half the night in revelry, barking, or yelping with short, quick, yet weak tones, like those of very young puppies. While in the height of their playfulness and clamor, however, should there be the least alarm they all vanish into their cells in an instant, and the village remains blank and silent. In case they are hard pressed by their pursuers, without any hope of escape, they will

assume a pugnacious air, and a most whimsical look of impotent wrath and defiance.

"The prairie dogs are not permitted to remain sole and indisputable inhabitants of their own homes. Owls and rattlesnakes are said to take up their abodes with them, but whether as invited guests or unwelcome intruders is a matter of controversy. The owls are of a peculiar kind, and would seem to partake of the character of the hawk, for they are taller and more erect on their legs, more alert in their looks and rapid in their flight than ordinary owls, and do not confine their excursions to the night, but sally forth in broad day.

"Some say that they only inhabit cells which the prairie dogs have deserted, and suffered to go to ruin, in consequence of the death in them of some relative; for they would make out this little animal to be endowed with keen sensibilities, that will not permit it to remain in the dwelling when it has witnessed the death of a friend. Other fanciful speculators represent the owl as a kind of housekeeper to the prairie dog; and, from having a note very similar, insinuate that it acts in a manner as family preceptor, and teaches the young litter to bark.

"As to the rattlesnake, nothing satisfactory has been ascertained of the part he plays in this most interesting household; though he is considered as little better than a sycophant and sharper, that winds himself into the concerns of the honest, credulous little dog, and takes him in most sadly. Certain it is, if he acts as toad-eater, he occasionally solaces himself with more than the usual perquisites of his order, as he is now and then detected with one of the younger members of the family in his maw."

The second volume of the Miscellanies, comprising "Abbotsford" and "Newstead Abbey," immediately followed the first volume. These are briefer compositions, and are delightful sketches, drawn from the author's personal recollections of those two literary shrines.

These two volumes of miscellanies were received with great favor on both sides of the Atlantic, and the author was much encouraged to proceed with the series. The third volume appeared in the following autumn with the title of "Legends of the Conquest of Spain."

CHAPTER XXIX.

IN October, 1836, Mr. Irving put to press his volume, "Astoria," a work which he had been induced to undertake at the solicitation of the millionaire, John Jacob Astor.* This book relates to Mr. Astor's settlement of a colony which he had established at the mouth of the Columbia River; and the plan of the great capitalist was to secure to himself by this

* Mr. Astor was a native of Germany, born in 1763, and when twenty years old emigrated to this country and engaged in the fur trade, establishing himself in New York. He displayed great skill in business, and prospered to such an extent that he was soon able to export furs abroad in his own ships, bringing back foreign produce for the New York market. While engaged extensively in the fur trade, he also made large purchases of real estate in New York, which advanced greatly on his hands. At his death he was worth twenty million dollars.

In his life-time, and at his death, Mr. Astor made many liberal donations for benevolent objects; but his principal beneficence was the establishment of the Library which bears his name. This Library is already one of the largest in the country, and its accommodations and volumes have been largely increased since his death by the liberality of his son, W. B. Astor, Esq. The library buildings are sufficiently ample to contain two hundred thousand volumes, and will soon be full.

volume the reputation of having originated the enterprise, and founded the colony which was "likely to have such important results in the history of commerce and colonization." Irving, from the press of other literary engagements, was reluctant to undertake the work; but having enlisted the co-operation of his nephew, Mr. Pierre M. Irving, who was to arrange the principal materials, to be afterward finished and embellished by his uncle, the work was duly prosecuted and executed to the entire satisfaction of Mr. Astor, as well as to the gratification and warm approval of the public.

Of "Astoria" the "North American Review" remarks, that "the whole work bears the impress of Mr. Irving's taste. A great variety of somewhat discordant materials is brought into a consistent whole, of which the parts have a due reference to each other; and some sketches of life and traits of humor come fresh from the pen of Geoffrey Crayon."

"I have," says Sidney Smith, "read 'Astoria' with great pleasure. It is a book to put in your library as an entertaining, well-written—*very* well-written-account of savage life on a most extensive scale."

"The most finished narrative," says the "London Spectator," "that ever was written, whether with regard to plan or execution. The arrangement has all the art of fiction, yet without any sacrifice of truth or exactness. The composition we are inclined to rate as the *chef d'œuvre* of Washington Irving."

The climate of the country west of the Rocky Mountains is described as follows:

"A remarkable fact characteristic of the country west of the Rocky Mountains is the mildness and equability of the climate. That great mountain barrier seems to divide the continent into different climates, even in the same degrees of latitude. The rigorous winters and sultry summers, and all the capricious irregularities of temperature prevalent on the Atlantic side of the mountains, are but little felt on their western declivities. The countries between them and the Pacific are blessed with milder and steadier temperature, resembling the climates of parallel latitudes in Europe. In the plains and valleys but little snow falls throughout the winter, and usually melts while falling. It rarely lies on the ground more than two days at a time, except on the summits of the mount-

ains. The winters are rainy rather than cold. The rains for five months—from the middle of October to the middle of March—are almost incessant, and often accompanied by tremendous thunder and lightning. The winds prevalent at this season are from the south and south-east, which usually bring rain. Those from the north to the south-west are the harbingers of fair weather and a clear sky. The residue of the year—from the middle of March to the middle of October—an interval of seven months, is serene and delightful. There is scarcely any rain throughout this time, yet the face of the country is kept fresh and verdant by nightly dews, and occasionally by humid fogs in the mornings. These are not considered prejudicial to health, since both the natives and the whites sleep in the open air with perfect impunity.

"While this equable and bland temperature prevails throughout the lower country, the peaks and ridges of the vast mountains by which it is dominated are covered with perpetual snow. This renders them discernible at a great distance, shining at times like bright summer clouds, at other times assuming the most aerial tints,

and always forming brilliant and striking features in the vast landscape. The mild temperature prevalent throughout the country is attributed by some to the succession of winds from the Pacific Ocean, extending from latitude twenty degrees to at least fifty degrees, north. These temper the heat of summer, so that in the shade no one is incommoded by perspiration; they also soften the rigors of winter, and produce such a moderation in the climate that the inhabitants can wear the same dress throughout the year."

A party traversing the wilderness found themselves reduced to such desperate circumstances as are here depicted:

"In this way they proceeded for seventeen miles over a level plain of sand until, seeing a few antelopes in the distance, they encamped on the margin of a small stream. All now that were capable of exertion turned out to hunt for a meal. Their efforts were fruitless, and after dark they returned to their camp famished almost to desperation. As they were preparing for the third time to lie down to sleep without a mouthful to eat, Le Clerc, one of the Canadians, gaunt and wild with hunger, approached

Mr. Stuart with his gun in his hand. 'It was all in vain,' he said, 'to attempt to proceed any further without food. They had a barren plain before them, three or four days' journey in extent, on which nothing was to be procured. They must all perish before they could get to the end of it. It was better, therefore, that one should die to save the rest.' He proposed, therefore, that they should cast lots, adding, as an inducement for Mr. Stuart to assent to the proposition, that he, as leader of the party, should be exempted.

"Mr. Stuart shuddered at the horrible proposition, and endeavored to reason with the man, but his words were unavailing. At length, snatching up his rifle, he threatened to shoot him on the spot if he persisted. The famished wretch dropped on his knees, begged pardon in the most abject terms, and promised never again to offend him with such a suggestion.

"Quiet being restored to the forlorn encampment, each one sought repose. Mr. Stuart, however, was so exhausted by the agitation of the past scene acting upon his emaciated frame that he could scarce crawl to his miserable couch, where, notwithstanding his fatigues, he

passed a sleepless night, revolving upon their dreary situation, and the desperate prospect before them.

"Before daylight the next morning they were up and on their way. They had nothing to detain them, no breakfast to prepare, and to linger was to perish. They proceeded, however, but slowly, for all were faint and weak. Here and there they passed the skulls and bones of buffaloes, which showed that these animals must have been hunted here during the past season. The sight of these bones served only to mock their misery. After traveling about nine miles along the plain they ascended a range of hills, and had scarcely gone two miles further when, to their great joy, they discovered an 'old run-down buffalo bull,' the laggard, probably, of some herd that had been hunted and harassed through the mountains. They now all stretched themselves out to encompass and make sure of this solitary animal, for their lives depended upon their success. After considerable trouble and infinite anxiety they at length succeeded in killing him. He was instantly flayed and cut up, and so ravenous was their hunger that they devoured some of the flesh raw. The resi-

due they carried to a brook near by, where they encamped, lit a fire, and began to cook.

"Mr. Stuart was fearful that in their famished state they would eat to excess and injure themselves. He caused a soup to be made of some of the meat, and that each should take a quantity of it as a prelude to his supper. This may have had a beneficial effect, for though they sat up the greater part of the night cooking and cramming, no one suffered any inconvenience.

"The next morning the feasting was resumed, and about midday, feeling somewhat recruited and refreshed, they set out on their journey with renovated spirits, shaping their course toward a mountain, the summit of which they saw towering in the east, and near to which they expected to find the head-waters of the Missouri."

The next work brought out by Mr. Irving was his "Adventures of Captain Bonneville, U. S. A., in the Rocky Mountains of the Far West." This work was digested from the journal of Captain Bonneville, which Irving purchased of him, and which, with illustrations from various other sources, he shaped into this

deeply interesting book. "It is," says Chancellor Kent, "full of exciting incident, and by reason of Mr. Irving's fine taste and attractive style possesses the power and the charms of romance."

We have a description of the trapper of the Far West as he flourished forty years ago:

"Accustomed to live in tents or to bivouac in the open air, he despises the comforts and is impatient of the confinement of the log-house. If his meal is not ready in season he takes his rifle, hies to the forest or prairie, shoots his own game, lights his fire, and cooks his repast. With his horse and his rifle he is independent of the world, and spurns at all restraints.

"There is, perhaps, no class of men on the face of the earth who lead a life of more continued exertion, peril, and excitement, and who are more enamored of their occupation than the free trappers of the West. No toil, no danger, no privation can turn the trapper from his pursuit. His passionate excitement at times resembles a mania. In vain may the most vigilant and cruel savages beset his path, in vain may rocks and precipices and wintry

torrents oppose his progress, let but a single track of a beaver meet his eye and he forgets all danger and defies all difficulties. At times he may be seen, with his traps on his shoulder, buffeting his way across rapid streams, amid floating blocks of ice; at other times he is to be found with his traps swung on his back, clambering the most rugged mountains, scaling or descending the most frightful precipices, searching, by routes inaccessible to the horse, and never before trodden by white man, for springs and lakes unknown to his comrades, and where he may meet with his favorite game. Such is the mountaineer, the hardy trapper of the West; and such, as we have slightly sketched it, is the wild Robin Hood kind of life, with all its strange and motley populace, now existing in full vigor among the Rocky Mountains. . . .

"The American trapper stands by himself, and is peerless for the service of the wilderness. Drop him in the midst of a prairie or in the heart of the mountains and he is never at a loss. He notices every landmark, can retrace his route through the most monotonous plains or the most perplexed labyrinths of the mountains; no danger nor difficulty can appal him,

and he scorns to complain under any privation. . . . In fact, no one can cope with him as a stark tramper of the wilderness."

The trapper's Indian wife is also pictured for us:

"The free trapper, while a bachelor, has no greater pet than his horse; but the moment he takes a wife, he discovers that he has a still more fanciful and capricious animal on which to lavish his expenses. No sooner does an Indian belle experience this promotion than all her notions at once rise and expand to the dignity of her situation; and the purse of her lover, and his credit into the bargain, are tasked to the utmost to fit her out in becoming style. The wife of a free trapper to be equipped and arrayed like any ordinary and undistinguished squaw! Perish the groveling thought! In the first place, she must have a horse for her own riding; but no jaded, sorry, earth-spirited hack, such as is sometimes assigned by an Indian husband for the transportation of his squaw and her papooses. The wife of a free trapper must have the most beautiful animal she can lay her eyes on. And then as to his decoration: head-stall, breast-bands, saddle, crupper, are lavishly embroidered

with beads, and hung with thimbles, hawks' bells, and bunches of ribbons. From each side of the saddle hangs an *esquimoot*, a sort of pocket, in which she bestows the residue of her trinkets and knickknacks which cannot be crowded on the decoration of her horse or herself. Over this she folds, with great care, a drapery of scarlet and bright-colored calicoes, and now considers the caparison of her steed complete.

"As to her own person she is even still more extravagant. Her hair, esteemed beautiful in proportion to its length, is carefully plaited, and made to fall with seeming negligence over either breast. Her riding-hat is stuck full of party-colored feathers; her robe, fashioned somewhat after that of the whites, is of red, green, and sometimes of gray cloth, but always of the finest texture that can be procured. Her leggins and moccasins are of the most beautiful and expensive workmanship, and fitted neatly to the foot and ankle, which, with the Indian women, are generally well-formed and delicate. Then as to jewelry, in the way of finger-rings, ear-rings, necklaces, and other female glories, nothing within reach of the trapper's means is omitted that can tend

to impress the beholder with an idea of the lady's high estate. To finish the whole, she selects from among her blankets one of glowing colors, and, throwing it over her shoulders with native grace, vaults into the saddle of her gay, prancing steed, and is ready to 'follow her mountaineer 'to the last gasp with love and loyalty.'"

We have a curious use of the lasso in the hands of a Californian horseman:

"The lasso is also of great use in furnishing the public with a favorite, though barbarous sport: the combat between a bear and a wild bull. For this purpose three or four horsemen sally forth to some wood frequented by bears, and, depositing the carcass of a bullock, hide themselves in the vicinity. The bears are soon attracted by the bait. As soon as one fit for their purpose makes his appearance they run out and dexterously noose him by either leg. After dragging him at full speed until he is fatigued they secure him more effectually, and, tying him on the carcass of the bullock, draw him in triumph to the scene of action. By this time he is exasperated to such frenzy that they are sometimes obliged to throw cold water on

him to moderate his fury; and dangerous would it be for horse and rider were he, while in this paroxysm, to break his bonds.

"A wild bull of the fiercest kind, which has been caught and exasperated in the same manner, is now produced, and both animals are turned loose in the arena of a small amphitheater. The mortal fight begins instantly, and always at first to the disadvantage of Bruin, fatigued as he is by his previous rough riding. Roused at length by the repeated goring of the bull, he seizes his muzzle with his sharp claws, and, clinging to this most sensitive part, causes him to bellow with rage and agony. In his heat and fury the bull lolls out his tongue; this is easily clutched by the bear; with a desperate effort he overturns his huge antagonist, and then dispatches him without difficulty."

CHAPTER XXX.

IT was in the midst of this season of busy authorship and publishing that Mr. Irving purchased his famous seat of "Sunnyside." The place which he selected was a beautiful spot on the banks of the Hudson near Tarrytown, and comprised ten acres of ground, with a small Dutch cottage upon it built of stone. He thus describes the locality and his plan: "It is a beautiful spot, capable of being made a little paradise. There is a small stone Dutch cottage on it, built about a century since, and inhabited by one of the Van Tassels. I have had an architect up there, and shall build upon the old mansion this summer. My idea is to make a little nookery somewhat in the Dutch style, quaint, but unpretending. It will be of stone. The cost will not be much. I do not intend to set up any establishment there, but to put some simple furniture in it and keep it as a nest, to which I can resort when in the mood." Soon afterward he writes again: "The workmen

are busy upon my cottage, which I think will be a snug little Dutch nookery when finished. It will be of stone, so as to be cool in summer and warm in winter. The expense will be but moderate, as I have it built in the simplest manner, depending upon its quaintness rather than its costliness." Subsequently, on visiting the spot and inspecting the erection of the cottage, he tells his brother that he intends to write a legend or two about it and its vicinity by way of making it pay for itself.

Another letter to his brother Peter, who had now been abroad more than a quarter of a century, and who was contemplating a return home, presents at once a charming picture of the new cottage home and of the warm fraternal affection glowing in the bosom of its proprietor. "My cottage," he writes, "is not yet finished, but I shall drive at it as soon as the opening of spring will permit, and I trust by the time of your arrival to have a delightful little nest for you on the banks of the Hudson. It will be fitted to defy both hot weather and cold. There is a lovely prospect from its windows, and a sweet green bank in front, shaded by locust trees, up which the summer breeze creeps de-

lightfully. It is one of the most delicious banks in the world for reading, and dozing, and dreaming during the heats of summer; and there are no mosquitoes in the neighborhood. Here you shall have a room to yourself that shall be a *sanctum sanctorum*. You may have your meals in it if you please, and be as much alone as you desire. You shall also have a room prepared for you in town, where you will be equally master of your time and yourself, and free from all intrusion; while at both places you will have those at hand who love and honor you, and who will be ready to do any thing that may contribute to your comfort."

Thus how pure and beautiful is true affection; and that, too, whether fraternal, filial, or parental! And how is it intensified and elevated when its objects are frail and feeble, as was this absent brother, and when dark fears come in that they may not be long with us! What would our love not prompt us to do for such dear ones! And how eager we are to spend and be spent in their behalf! And then if the grave must close over them, how unutterable is the love that mingles itself with our great sorrow, impelling us almost to the wish that we might lie down with the

loved and lost, and sleep the long sleep with them! And yet Christianity reproves all this, and whispers to bereaved mourners touching their departed treasures, "Not lost, but gone before!"

The long-absent brother whom Irving, as above, addressed so pleasantly and affectionately, and who on his return home was to receive so welcome a reception, reached New York in the following summer, and the promised home at "Sunnyside" was ready for him in the early autumn.

The closing months of this same year of 1836 found Washington, at fifty-three years of age, pleasantly and happily domiciled in his new and beautiful home on the banks of the Hudson. It is, indeed, a sunny scene to contemplate. The author's literary fame is wide-spread, acknowledged, and sure. Personally he is greatly and universally respected and beloved. His health is perfect, and his spirits buoyant and sprightly as in the days of his youth. His pecuniary circumstances are entirely comfortable and increasingly prosperous. His pen has been, for the most part, greatly industrious, and was never more so than now. His audience has

grown to millions, and he has only to write, and a hundred publishers are ready and earnest to print, and the world is eager to read. The very highest and selectest society welcome him to its brilliant circles. Brothers and sisters are proud of him, and an interesting circle of nephews and nieces look up to him with admiration, love, and veneration. The "Roost" is the significant epithet by which he has labeled his new and pleasant home. His beloved brother is with him, cheerful and happy after his long exile and repeated misfortunes. Two trusty and competent servants, a man and woman, attend to all their domestic wants; and thus there opens to us at this "Sunnyside" home about as attractive a picture of bachelor life as can be well conceived.

One evening the proprietor returns to the "Roost" from the great city, and he sits down and pens a letter to an absent niece, and tells her, or rather writes that he *cannot* tell her, of his happiness in getting back again to his "own dear bright little home, and leave behind him the hurry and worry and flurry of the city." He found all things going on well, his brother passing his time comfortably with better health and

spirits, and still improving, enjoying the cosy comforts of the cottage, regular in his meals, cheerful, social, and busy. He adds that the geese and ducks are at peace; that a fancy pig has arrived at the cottage, which, being of the fair sex, and of "peculiar beauty," he calls *Fanny;* that "Imp," that is, the cat, has taken to him lovingly, and that he expects to have great comfort in that cat "if it should be spared," etc. A few days later he writes to Ebenezer that "all goes on well at the Roost. Brother Peter is getting quite in good feather again, and begins to crow! You must contrive to come up soon if it is only to see my new pig, which is a darling."

So the "Roost" and its keeper have the seeming of perfect correspondence and harmony. "The place for the man, and the man for the place," was never more happily exemplified. Every thing was complete, tasteful, home-like, comfortable, and comely. The decorous and excellent arrangements had been created by the author's own genius and under his constant supervision, and, being now completely prepared and finished, he was as completely ready and qualified to enjoy every thing appertaining to his

fine establishment as is possible to imagine; and the entire picture is, in a very high degree, pleasant and beautiful. Would that so attractive a scene might continue through many, many years! But shadows must soon pass over even "Sunnyside;" yet we will not anticipate.

CHAPTER XXXI.

IN 1838 Mr. Irving received the Tammany nomination for Mayor of New York City, which he very promptly declined. Immediately afterward he was invited by President Van Buren to a seat in his cabinet as Secretary of the Navy, which he also declined. In his reply to this flattering invitation he said that it was not so much the duties of the post that he feared, as the concerns of the Navy Department would be peculiarly interesting to him; "but I shrink," he adds, "from the harsh cares and turmoils of public and political life at Washington, and feel that I am too sensitive to endure the bitter personal hostility and the slanders and misrepresentations of the press which beset high station in this country. This argues, I confess, a weakness of spirit, and a want of true philosophy; but I speak of myself as I am, not as I ought to be. . . . I really believe it would take but a short career of public life at Washington to render me mentally and physically a perfect

wreck, and to hurry me prematurely into old age."

Amid the flattering honors thus proffered to Mr. Irving scenes of mourning and affliction were intermingled. In March of this year died his brother John, four years his senior, and who had for a score of years been first Judge of the Court of Common Pleas for the city and county of New York, and who was eminent for his moral and social qualities.

In the following June came a much deeper affliction in the death of Peter. This was Irving's most cherished and dearest brother. They had both remained unmarried, had been much together in their long residence abroad, had encountered common misfortunes, were similar in many of their tastes, and were accustomed to confer together upon literary and other plans and enterprises. Indeed, history presents few instances of a purer, more elevated, unselfish and refined fraternal relationship than what long existed between these two brothers. All this is, specially manifest in Washington, who seemed to identify his own interests with those of his brother, with whom he was ever ready to share his last cent if it were necessary for the comfort

of one he loved so much. When Peter, after so long an absence, was, in his feeble health, contemplating a return from Europe, Washington seemed to count it a mere pastime to cross the ocean for the purpose of conveying his invalid brother homeward. And there are few moral pictures more beautiful than that of Irving arranging and furnishing, as we have before seen, in the new cottage of Sunnyside, the room that was to be the special resting-place and home of his cherished brother. And it is mournful to observe how few were the brief months which the invalid would be permitted to linger within that peaceful paradise. Yet such is this world, and here we have no continuing city. Happy they who seek one to come!

A letter of Irving to one of his sisters, penned three months after his brother's decease, partially reveals the depths of his affliction and the greatness of his bereavement. "Every day," he writes, "every hour, I feel how completely Peter and myself were intertwined together in the whole course of our existence. Indeed, the very circumstance of our both having never been married bound us more closely together. The rest of the family were married and had families

of their own to engross or divide their sympathies, and to weaken the fraternal tie; but we stood in the original, unimpaired relation to each other, and in proportion as others were weaned away by circumstances we grew more and more together. I was not conscious how much this was the case while he was living, but now that he is gone I feel how all-important he was to me. A dreary feeling of loneliness comes on me at times that I reason against in vain; for, though surrounded by affectionate relatives, I feel that none can be what he was to me; none can take so thorough an interest in my concerns; to none can I so confidingly lay open my every thought and feeling, and expose my every fault and foible, certain of such perfect toleration and indulgence. Since our dear mother's death I have had no one who could so patiently and tenderly bear with all my weaknesses and infirmities, and throw over every error the mantle of affection. I have been trying, of late, to resume my pen, and, by engaging my mind in some intellectual task, to keep it from brooding over these melancholy themes, but I find it almost impossible. My literary pursuits have been so often carried on by his

side and under his eye, I have been so accustomed to talk over every plan with him, and, as it were, to think aloud when in his presence, that I cannot open a book, or take up a paper, or recall a past vein of thought, without having him instantly before me, and finding myself completely overcome."

It was at this time, and partly to soothe his sorrow for his lost brother, that Mr. Irving commenced a literary work which he counted upon as one of his most important efforts, and from which he anticipated an ample pecuniary compensation. The title of this new work was to be "The Conquest of Mexico." On this undertaking he had wrought diligently for some months, when he visited New York for the purpose of consulting some works relating to his theme in the "City Library." While thus engaged he was accosted by Mr. Cogswell, afterward connected with the Astor Library, who inquired of Irving concerning the subject upon which he was now employing himself. As the result of this interview he learned from Mr. Cogswell that Prescott, the historian, was engaged upon the same theme with himself. He was of course greatly surprised, and doubt-

less much disappointed also, as it was a subject in which he had long been deeply interested, and on which he had already expended much labor. He, however, promptly requested Mr. Cogswell to notify Mr. Prescott that he should abandon the subject to him, and that he was happy of the opportunity of testifying his great esteem for the talents of the historian. After reading over what he had written, in a fit of vexation for having lost so magnificent a theme he destroyed the manuscript.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

IN the spring of 1839 Mr. Irving entered into an engagement with the "Knickerbocker Magazine," by which he was to furnish monthly contributions for a compensation of two thousand dollars a year. This arrangement continued during two years; and the articles were afterward collected into a volume which he entitled "Wolfert's Roost," and which realized an extraordinary sale.

The book comprises stories, sketches, legends, etc., the leading article having the same title as the book itself, and is a sort of history of his own Sunnyside comprised in three "Chronicles." The work, as a whole, is in the author's accustomed style, and, while it had so remarkable a sale, enjoyed an equally remarkable recommendation to the public. For so abundant were the flattering notices of this little work that the publishers collected and published them by themselves in a pamphlet of twenty-four pages. Besides these notices, the "West-

minster Review" remarks: "We envy those who will now read these tales and sketches of character for the first time. Washington Irving is here, as he always is, equal to himself. He has the finish of our best writers; he has the equality and gentle humor of Addison and Goldsmith."

The "London New Monthly Magazine," noticing "Wolfert's Roost," pleasantly remarks: "The warm-heart and the fine brain went into partnership, and wrote in good-fellowship together in the days of the 'Sketch-Book' and 'Salmagundi;' and they found it answer, and continue each the other's true yoke-fellow to this hour. . . . 'Geoffrey Crayon, Gent.,' is revived here."

Chronicle I of "Wolfert's Roost" thus commenceth:

"About five and twenty miles from the ancient and renowned city of Manhattan, formerly called New Amsterdam, and vulgarly called New York, on the eastern bank of that expansion of the Hudson known among Dutch mariners of yore as the Tappan Zee, being in fact the great Mediterranean Sea of the New Netherlands, stands a little old-fashioned stone mansion, all made up

of gable-ends, and as full of angles and corners as an old cocked hat. It is said, in fact, to have been modeled after the cocked hat of Peter the Headstrong, as the Escurial was modeled after the gridiron of the blessed St. Lawrence. Though but of small dimensions, yet, like many small people, it is of mighty spirit, and values itself greatly on its antiquity, being one of the oldest edifices for its size in the whole country. It claims to be an ancient seat of empire, I may rather say an empire of itself, and, like all empires great and small, has had its grand historical epochs. In speaking of this doughty and valorous little pile I shall call it by its usual appellation of 'The Roost,' though that is a name given to it in modern days, since it became the abode of the white man."

Wolfert Acker was one of the ancient denizens of "The Roost." He is represented as a worthy but ill-starred personage, whose aim through life had been to live in peace and quiet, and who yet had managed to keep in a perpetual stew, and was accustomed to share in every broil and ribwasting in all the country round. At length he retired in high dudgeon to seek peace and quiet at this fastness of the wilderness

called 'The Roost,' but he was still doomed to disappointment.

"Wolfert's luck followed him into retirement. He had shut himself up from the world, but he had brought with him a wife, and it soon passed into a proverb throughout the neighborhood that the cock of 'The Roost' was the most henpecked bird in the country. His house, too, was reputed to be harassed by Yankee witchcraft. When the weather was quiet every-where else, the wind, it was said, would howl and whistle about the gables; witches and warlocks would whirl about upon the weather-cocks and scream down the chimneys; nay, it was even hinted that Wolfert's wife was in league with the enemy, and used to ride on a broomstick to a witch's Sabbath in Sleepy Hollow. This, however, was all mere scandal, founded, perhaps, on her occasionally flourishing a broomstick in the course of a curtain lecture, or raising a storm within doors, as termagant wives are apt to do, and against which sorcery horseshoes are of no avail.

"Wolfert Acker died and was buried, but found no quiet even in the grave; for, if popular gossip be true, his ghost has occasionally been

seen walking by moonlight among the old gray moss-grown trees of his apple orchard."

One of the sketches presents us, in language equally admirable and truthful, the English and French character antithetically delineated:

"No greater contrast is exhibited than that of the French and English. The peace has deluged this gay city (Paris) with English visitors of all ranks and conditions. They throng every place of curiosity and amusement, fill the public gardens, the galleries, the cafés, saloons, theaters; always herding together, never associating with the French. The two nations are like two threads of different colors, tangled together, but never blended.

"In fact, they present a continual antithesis, and seem to value themselves upon being unlike each other; yet each have their peculiar merits, which should entitle them to each other's esteem. The French intellect is quick and active. It flashes its way into a subject with the rapidity of lightning, seizes upon remote conclusions with a sudden bound, and its deductions are almost intuitive. The English intellect is less rapid, but more persevering; less sudden, but more sure in its deductions. The

quickness and mobility of the French enable them to find enjoyment in the multiplicity of sensations. They speak and act more from immediate impressions than from reflection and meditation. They are, therefore, more social and communicative; more fond of society, and of places of public resort and amusement. An Englishman is more reflective in his habits. He lives in the world of his own thoughts, and seems more self-existent and self-dependent. He loves the quiet of his own apartment; even when abroad, he makes in a manner a little solitude around him by his silence and reserve; he moves about shy and solitary, and, as it were, buttoned up, body and soul.

"The French are great optimists; they seize upon every good as it flies, and revel in the passing pleasure. The Englishman is too apt to neglect the present good in preparing against the possible evil. However adversities may lower, let the sun shine but for a moment and forth sallies the mercurial Frenchman, in holiday dress and holiday spirits, gay as a butterfly, as though his sunshine were perpetual; but let the sun beam never so brightly, so there be but a cloud in the horizon, the wary Englishman

ventures forth distrustfully, with his umbrella in his hand.

"The Frenchman has a wonderful facility of turning small things to advantage. No one can be gay and luxurious on smaller means; no one requires less expense to be happy. He practices a kind of gilding in his style of living, and hammers out every guinea into gold leaf. The Englishman, on the contrary, is expensive in his habits, and expensive in his enjoyments. He values every thing, whether useful or ornamental, by what it costs. He has no satisfaction in show, unless it be solid and complete. Every thing goes with him by the square foot. Whatever display he makes, the depth is sure to equal the surface.

"The Frenchman's habitation, like himself, is open, cheerful, bustling, and noisy. He lives in a part of a great hotel, with wide portal, paved court, a spacious, dirty stone staircase, and a family on every floor. All is clatter and chatter. He is good-humored and talkative with his servants, sociable with his neighbors, and complaisant to all the world; any body has access to himself and his apartments; his very bed-room is open to visitors, whatever be

its state of confusion; and all this not from any peculiarly hospitable feeling, but from that communicative habit which predominates over his character.

"The Englishman, on the contrary, ensconses himself in a snug brick mansion, which he has all to himself; locks the front door, puts broken bottles along his walls and spring-guns and man-traps in his gardens; shrouds himself with trees and window curtains; exults in his quiet and privacy, and seems disposed to keep out noise, daylight, and company. His house, like himself, has a reserved, inhospitable exterior; yet whoever gains admittance is apt to find a warm heart and a warm fireside within.

"The French excel in wit, the English in humor; the French have gayer fancy, the English richer imaginations. The former are full of sensibility, easily moved, and prone to sudden and great excitement; but the excitement is not durable. The English are more phlegmatic, not so readily affected, but capable of being aroused to greater enthusiasm. The faults of these opposite temperaments are that the vivacity of the French is apt to sparkle up and be frothy, the gravity of the English

to settle down and grow muddy. When the two characters can be fixed in a medium, the French kept from effervescence, and the English from stagnation, both will be found excellent."

CHAPTER XXXIV.

IT was about this time (1840) that Mr. Irving prepared his biography of "Goldsmith," forming one of the volumes of Harpers' Family Library.*

His deeply interesting biography of "Margaret Davidson"† was published in 1841, the

*In his preface to "Goldsmith" Irving remarks of his writings that they were "the delight of his childhood, and had been a source of enjoyment to him throughout life." Mrs. Hall pronounces him "one of the most various and pleasing of English writers." His writings were voluminous, and occupied with a great variety of topics, in prose and poetry. Numerous biographies of "Goldsmith" have appeared at different times, among which those of Irving and Forster and Prior are perhaps the most valuable.

†This was the younger of two most remarkable sisters—the elder, Lucretia Maria, born in 1808, and the younger, Margaret Miller, in 1823. Lucretia began to write verses at four years old, having secretly taught herself writing by copying letters from printed books. At sixteen she was placed at school at Troy, New York, w' her health was soon undermined by hard study. Being unrestrained from severe application she speedily fell into consumption, and died at seventeen. She destroyed much of her poetry, but two hundred and seventy-eight pieces were preserved.

Margaret, the younger sister, whose biography was prepared by Irving, was born in 1823, and was between two and three

copyright of which he transferred to the mother of the youthful poetess.

In a letter to a sister we have the following vivid and pleasant picture of his country neighborhood as it was at this time, and about four years after the completion of Sunnyside. "You would," he writes, "scarcely recognize the place, it has undergone such changes. These have in a great degree taken place since I have pitched my tent in the neighborhood. My residence here has attracted others; cottages and country seats have sprung up along the banks of the Tappan Sea, and Tarrytown has become the metropolis of quite a fashionable vicinity. When you knew the village it was little better than a mere hamlet crouched down at the foot of a hill, with its dock for the accom-

years old at the death of Lucretia. She began to write poems at six; at ten she wrote and acted a drama; her mental activity led her in the same way with her sister, and she, too, died of consumption when about fourteen years and a half old. The characters of these two sisters seemed nearly angelical, while their poems are marked by exceeding sweetness and beauty. The works of both sisters are published together.

Of Margaret, Mr. Irving says: "I saw her when she was about eleven years old, and again when about fourteen. She was a beautiful little being, as bright and as fragile as a flower, and like a flower she has passed away. Her poetical effusions are surprising, and the spirit they breathe is heavenly."

modation of the weekly market sloop. Now it has mounted the hill; boasts of its hotels, and churches of various denominations; has its little Episcopalian Church with an organ—the gates of which on Sundays are thronged with equipages belonging to families resident within ten or a dozen miles along the river banks. We have, in fact, one of the most agreeable neighborhoods I ever resided in. Some of our neighbors are here only for the summer, having their winter establishments in town; others remain in the country all the year. We have frequent gatherings at each other's houses without parade or expense, and I do not know when I have seen more delightful little parties, or more elegant little groups of females. We have occasionally excellent music, for several of the neighborhood have been well taught, have good voices, and acquit themselves well both with harp and piano; and our parties always end with a dance. We have picnic parties also, sometimes in some inland valley or piece of wood, sometimes on the banks of the Hudson, where some repair by land, others by water. You would be delighted with these picturesque assemblages on some wild woodland point jutting into the Tappan

Sea, with gay groups on the green under the trees; carriages glistening through the woods; a yacht, with flapping sails and fluttering streamers, anchored about half a mile from shore, and row-boats plying to and from it filled with lady passengers."

CHAPTER XXXV.

A NEW and distinguished honor was now awaiting Washington Irving. He was contemplating anew a Life of his great and illustrious namesake, and had actually commenced the work, when news came suddenly to him that he had received the appointment of Minister to Spain. Nothing seemed to have been further from his thoughts than such an appointment. Daniel Webster, then Secretary of State, who had recommended Irving for this Embassy, remarked, when sufficient time had elapsed for the message to reach him, "Washington is now the most astonished man in the city of New York!"

Every way honorable to Irving was this appointment, and the circumstances attending it. As noticed, it was utterly unexpected and unthought of; of course it was entirely unsought. Nor was it due to any political opinions or preferences, for he seems to have been the least of all a political partisan. His acquaint-

ance with Spain and the Spanish language doubtless had its weight in the appointment, while it seemed to be mainly due to his general merit and popularity. A note from New York to his brother, then at Sunnyside, tells briefly the story:

"Nothing could be more gratifying than the manner in which this appointment has been made. It was suggested by Mr. Webster to the President, immediately adopted by him, heartily concurred in by all the Cabinet, and confirmed in the Senate almost by acclamation. When it was mentioned, Mr. Clay, who has opposed almost all the other nominations, exclaimed, 'Ah, this is a nomination every body will concur in! If the President would send us such names as this we should never have any difficulty.' What has still more enhanced the gratification of this signal honor is the unanimous applause with which it is greeted by the public. The only drawback upon all this is the hard trial of tearing myself away from dear little Sunnyside. This has harassed me more than I can express; but I begin to reconcile myself to it, as it will be but a temporary absence."

Of course, Mr. Irving accepted the appoint-

ment; and after visiting Washington to receive his instructions, and declining a public dinner proffered to him, without distinction of party, at New York, he embarked for Spain April 10, 1842. A rapid and prosperous voyage brought him to Bristol, Eng., whence he took cars for London. Here and at Birmingham, with his sister, Mrs. Van Wart, he spent three or four delightful weeks, and then crossed the channel to Havre, and after a few days proceeded thence by steamboat and cars to Paris. In a letter to his sister at Birmingham is an affecting allusion to this passage up to the metropolis: "My visit to my excellent friend Beasly," he writes, "and my voyage up the Seine, however gratifying in other respects, were full of melancholy associations; for at every step I was reminded of my dear, dear brother Peter, who had so often been my companion in these scenes. In fact he is continually present to my mind since my return to Europe, where we passed so many years together; and I think this circumstance contributes greatly to the mixture of melancholy with which of late I regard all those scenes and objects which once occasioned such joyous excitement." Visiting one little quiet and favorite

spot of his brother's resort at Rouen, he was entirely unmanned. "I was, for a time, a complete child. My dear, dear brother! As I write the tears are gushing from my eyes."

At Paris also, as at London, Mr. Irving lingered a few weeks, making his home with his niece, Mrs. Storrow, who, not long before, had been one of the little circle at the "Roost." Here he paid his respects, of course, to the American Minister, Mr. Cass, and was introduced by him to the royal family and other distinguished persons.

Early in July, in company with his Secretary and the two young gentlemen attached to the Embassy, he set forward for Madrid. The party traveled by easy stages, stopping at several old historical localities, and reached Madrid on the 25th of the month. He had arranged to occupy the quarters of his predecessor, assuming his apartments, furniture, servants, and, in general, the entire establishment. Thus, with the least possible trouble or delay, he found himself, with his companions, pleasantly situated, and ready at once for the customary presentations at court. In a day or two he is formally and officially introduced by his predecessor to

the Regent, Espartero; afterward he is presented in his official capacity to the young Queen Isabella. "She received me," he writes, "with a grave and quiet welcome, expressed in a very low voice. She is nearly twelve years of age, and is sufficiently well grown for her years. She has a somewhat fair complexion, quite pale, with bluish or light gray eyes, a grave demeanor, but a graceful deportment. I could not but regard her with deep interest, knowing what important concerns depended upon the life of this fragile little being, and to what a stormy and precarious career she might be destined." Upon these closing words the present exiled condition of this same Queen Isabella is an impressive commentary.

Here, after being well settled with his books, Mr. Irving had anticipated abundant leisure and opportunity for literary occupation, and proposed to engage at once upon his Life of Washington. This pleasant anticipation, however, was not destined to be fulfilled. He did, indeed, compose several chapters of his new work, but he was soon compelled to experience a return of the tedious disease which had troubled him twenty years before. This attack

of illness was long and wearisome, rendering it impossible for him to write, while even reading was disapproved by his physician. By the advice of the latter, he, about a year after his arrival at Madrid, committed the care of the Embassy to his Secretary and made a visit to Paris, taking lodgings at Versailles with his niece and her husband. Here his time passed delightfully, although he was able to walk but little without aggravating his malady. He returned, after an absence of three months, just in time to witness the rejoicings on account of the young Queen's accession to the throne. "All the houses," he writes, "were decorated, the balconies hung with tapestry; there were triumphal arches, fountains running with milk and wine, games, dances, processions and parades by day, illuminations and spectacles at night, and the streets were constantly thronged by the populace in their holiday garb."

Mr. Irving was now sixty years of age, and during the year and a half which he had spent abroad, part of which time he experienced ill health, he often looked with longing eyes toward his "dear Sunnyside home." "My heart yearns for home, and as I have now probably

turned the last corner in life, and my remaining years are growing scanty in number, I begrudge every one that I am obliged to pass separated from my cottage and my kindred."

In the summer of 1844, while at Barcelona, whither he had come from Madrid with dispatches from our Government to the Spanish Queen, Mr. Irving received also a dispatch granting him temporary leave of absence for the benefit of his health. Accordingly, in a week's time he was off for Paris, by way of Marseilles, Avignon, and Lyons. Passing a few delightful days with his niece and her family at Versailles, he set off for Havre to visit a friend there, and thence took passage direct to London. Passing through the city *incognito*, he immediately took cars for his sister's at Birmingham, whence, after a three weeks' visit, he set his face again toward France. At Paris he tarried some time to avail himself of the baths, visited the royal family at St. Cloud, and then proceeded to Madrid, which he reached near the middle of November, to the great joy of his household."

Mr. Irving's private letters of this period of his Embassy represent the Spanish court as being remarkably gay. The present exiled Queen

he pictures as being then in her bright and early youth, handsome, gay, and full of life. At a court ball at the hotel of General Narvaez "she was in high glee. Indeed, I never saw a school-girl at a school ball enjoy herself more completely. At some blunders and queer and old-fashioned dancing of one of the foreign ministers she was convulsed with laughter. "I have never seen her in such a joyous mood, having chiefly seen her on ceremonious occasions, and had no idea that she had so much real *fun* in her disposition. She danced with various members of the diplomatic corps; and about four o'clock in the morning, when she was asked if she could venture upon another dance, 'O yes!' she replied, 'I could dance eight more if necessary.'" Mr. Irving's own mental position at this period of his life, and amid the gayeties of the Spanish court, is not without interest. In a letter to his niece, Mrs. Storrow, he represents himself as often being, in the midst of the brilliant throngs, the very dullest of the dull, as inclined to gaze on the crowd around him with perfect apathy, and finds it next to impossible to reciprocate the common-place speeches so common in fashionable society. "I have grown

too old or too wise for all that. I hope those who observe my delinquency attribute it to the latter cause."

Whether they did so "attribute it" or not, a multitude of others, equally wise and good, will unfailingly contemplate the matter in accordance with his wishes; and the pity is that such beautiful wisdom too often comes so late; that it should not come even amid the dew of youth.

"My son if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee; so that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding; yea, if thou cryest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; if thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; then shalt thou understand."

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE spring of 1845 found Mr. Irving again restored to perfect health, and anticipating the gratification of returning to the use of his pen, now for a long time laid aside save for the purpose of correspondence. In the following autumn he sent home his resignation of the Spanish Embassy; but his successor did not arrive until July of the next year, when he at once set out for England, and early in September embarked for Boston, where he arrived safely on the 18th, having been absent about four and a half years.

The day after he reached Boston he was in New York, and that afternoon he took passage for Sunnyside. What was his joy on reaching his home so greatly "beloved and longed for," and what was the joy of his friends to greet him after so long an absence, must be left to the imagination of the reader.

He very soon undertook an ample enlargement of the cottage, so as to render it entirely

eligible for the accommodation of himself and his brother's family. The improvement thus made seems, when finished, to have surpassed his expectation. But he did not stop with the dwelling, for, writing to his niece at Paris, he informs her that he had proceeded to bring his place into complete order, providing all the necessary offices for accommodating horses, poultry, and for other purposes; and that the constant superintendence of his improvements had much fatigued him, and had revived, to some extent, his old disease. But he enjoyed the satisfaction of seeing his place brought into perfect order "both within doors and without." A few days afterward issues from his pencil the following picture:

"My own place has never been so beautiful as at present. I have made more openings by pruning and cutting down trees, so that from the piazza I have several charming views of the Tappan Sea and the hills beyond, all set, as it were, in a verdant frame; and I am never tired of sitting there in my old Voltaire chair of a summer morning, with a book in my hand, sometimes reading, sometimes musing, and sometimes dozing, and mixing all up in a pleasant dream."

Irving seems now to be favorably situated for resuming his pen, and we accordingly find him fully at work upon his "Life of Washington." The winter of 1847 he spent among his friends in New York. His practice here was to work with his pen during the morning hours, and devote the remainder of the day and evening to visiting and attending the opera.

In the following summer he entered into an arrangement with Mr. George P. Putnam for the publication of a new and uniform edition of his works. By this arrangement Mr. Putnam was to publish the works entirely at his own expense, and allow the author twelve and a half per cent. on the retail price of each volume sold. The arrangement proved advantageous to both parties. The new editions as they successively appeared met with full success; a success which proved conclusively that the fame of the author, instead of being empty and transient, was of that kind which is solid and enduring.

This new publication by Putnam of Irving's writings included not only the works heretofore published, but several new volumes additional. He prepared, for example, by request of Mr. Putnam, a new and enlarged Biography of Gold-

smith. He wrote this work with great dispatch, intermitting, for the purpose, his labor on his Life of Washington. He further prolonged that intermission to write his two volumes, "Mahomet and his Successors." These were both added to the list of the collected works, while the "Alhambra" and "Conquest of Granada" closed the revised series.

This important plan being fulfilled, Mr. Irving once more resumed his "Washington," which he designed to be his great and last work, and which he was anxious to complete so as to enjoy a little season of leisure and rest previous to his death. In the beginning of the year 1852, in a letter to his niece at Paris, penned when sixty-nine years of age, we have a picture as affecting as it is interesting. "It is now half past twelve at night, and I am sitting here scribbling in my study long after all the family are abed and asleep, a habit I have fallen much into of late. Indeed, I never fagged more steadily with my pen than I do at present. I have a long task in hand which I am anxious to finish, that I may have a little leisure in the brief remnant of life that is left to me. However, I have a strong presentiment that I shall

die in harness, and I am content to do so, provided I have the cheerful exercise of intellect to the last."

Yet as the spring comes on he complains that his work in hand lags and drags heavily, being interrupted by repeated turns of ill-health, which seem to have been common with him for the two or three preceding years. "This spring," he writes, "I have been almost entirely idle, from my mind's absolutely refusing to be put in harness. I no longer dare task it as I used to do. When a man is in his seventieth year it is time to be cautious. I thought I should have been through this special undertaking by this time, but an unexpected turn of bilious fever in midwinter put me all aback, and now I have renounced all further pressing myself in the matter."

This state of things determined him to spend a part of the ensuing summer at Saratoga, where he entered with zest into the social life of that celebrated resort; and the pleasant recreation in which he indulged, together with a free use of the waters, proved decidedly beneficial. "I take the waters every morning," he writes, "and think they have a great effect on

my system. I have entirely got rid of all bilious symptoms, and find my mental faculties refreshed, invigorated, and brightened up. I have no doubt I derive some benefit from gossiping away part of the day in very agreeable female society, in which I experience such favorable treatment as inclines me to think old gentlemen are coming into fashion."

Returning from Saratoga about the first of August, so much was his delightful company missed there that many of those still remaining joined in an invitation to him to return, that the pleasure of his society might for a few days be renewed. He, however, declined the invitation. Of course, while at the Springs he was an object of universal attention, for his fame had long since become national. At the same time, as a friend who was with him there writes, "No one seemed more unconscious of the celebrity to which he had attained. In this there was not a particle of affectation. Nothing he shrank from with greater earnestness and sincerity than any attempt to lionize him. . . . He much preferred sauntering out alone, or with some familiar friend—trusting to any accidental event that might occur to indulge his own whim

or fancy, or crack a joke, as occasion might call."

The next winter Mr. Irving visited Washington, and was the guest for nearly two months of Secretary Kennedy. The main purpose of this visit was to consult the State archives in aid of his "Life of Washington." He seems, however, to have accomplished his purpose with much difficulty, owing to the perpetual *lionizing* to which he was subjected there, as in the summer before at Saratoga. He writes to his nieces at home that he had a world of documents to examine, but was much interrupted. He was managing, however, to keep clear of the evening parties, but the long dinners and return of visits were inevitable, and "cut up his time deplorably." He tarried till after the inauguration of President Pierce, and then returned to Sunnyside.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

FROM the period of his return from Washington for two years onward, Mr. Irving seems to have prosecuted, with considerable intervals of sickness, excursions, and visits, his new work. His health after reaching seventy was capricious and uncertain. His spirits, however, were almost always cheery, and he retained fully all those genial and kindly traits for which he had throughout life been so greatly distinguished.

He was seventy-two when he issued the first volume of his "Washington." This volume carried forward the history of its subject to his arrival at the camp before Boston as Commander-in-Chief of the American Army. He appears to have had serious misgivings in respect to the reception and success of this volume, entertaining some fears that it "might be the death of him." Amid such misgivings and fears, however, he received the following note from Mr. Bancroft, the historian:

"Your volume, of which I gained a copy last night, (and this morning have received one made still more precious by your own hand,) shortened my sleep last night at both ends. I was up late and early, and could not rest until I had finished the last page. Candor, good judgment that knows no bias, the felicity of selection, these are yours in common with the best historians. But, in addition, you have the peculiarity of writing from the heart, enchaining sympathy as well as commanding confidence—the happy magic that makes scenes, events, and personal anecdotes present themselves to you at your bidding, and fall into their natural places, and take color and warmth from your own nature. The style, too, is masterly, clear, easy, and graceful; picturesque without mannerism, and ornamented without losing simplicity. Among men of letters who do well, you must above all take the name of Felix, which so few of the great Roman generals could claim. You do every thing rightly, as if by grace; and I am in no fear of offending your modesty, for I think you were elected and fore-ordained to excel your contemporaries."

Such a letter as this, and from such a source,

joined with other flattering notices of the new work, encouraged him to proceed, and to accomplish the entire undertaking at whatever expense of labor.

Hence, within six months following the first volume appeared the second, bringing the narrative down to the victories of Trenton and Princeton. On the reception of this volume Prescott, the historian, thus addresses the author:

"You have done with Washington just as I thought you would; and, instead of a cold marble statue of a demi-god, you have made him a being of flesh and blood like ourselves—one with whom we can have sympathy. The general sentiment of the country has been too decidedly expressed for you to doubt for a moment that this is the portrait of him which is to hold a permanent place in the national gallery."

Other letters of approval from different sources, Bancroft, Tuckerman, and others, poured in upon him as this second volume appeared. In two months more the third volume was already passing through the press, and was published in the following July, (1856,) extending the nar-

rative to Washington's return to winter-quarters in 1779. In May of the following year the fourth volume was published, on occasion of which a letter from Bancroft pronounced his picture of Washington "the most vivid and truest that had ever been written;" and Prescott writes, "I have never before fully comprehended the character of Washington, nor did I know what capabilities it would afford to his biographer. Hitherto we have only seen him as a sort of marble Colossus, full of moral greatness, but without the touch of humanity that would give him interest. You have known how to give the marble flesh color, that brings it to the resemblance of life."

On the 9th of March, 1859, he put the finishing touch to the fifth and last volume of his "Life of Washington." The printers were nearly up with him when the final sheet was completed, and the volume appeared forthwith. And the pen of Washington Irving dropped from his hand never to be resumed.

We subjoin here a general view, from the pen of Edward Everett, of Mr. Irving as a writer:

"We regard Washington Irving as the best

living writer of English prose. Let those who doubt the correctness of this opinion name his superior. Let our brethren in England name the writer whom they place before Washington Irving. He unites the various qualities of a perfect manner of writing; and so happily adjusted and balanced are they, that their separate marked existence disappears in their harmonious blending. His style is sprightly, pointed, easy, correct, and expressive, without being too studiously guarded against the opposite faults. It is without affectation, parade, or labor. If we were to characterize a manner which owes much of its merit to the absence of any glaring characteristic, we should perhaps say that it is, above the style of all other writers of the day, marked with an expressive elegance. Washington Irving never buries up the clearness and force of the meaning under a heap of fine words; nor, on the other hand, does he think it necessary to be coarse, slovenly, or uncouth, in order to be emphatic. . . .

"In bestowing upon Mr. Irving the praise of a perfect style of writing it must not be understood that we commend him in a point of mere manner. To write as Mr. Irving writes is not

an affair which rests in a dexterous use of words alone; at least not if we admit the popular but unphilosophical distinction between words and ideas. Mr. Irving writes well because he thinks well; because his ideas are just, clear, and definite. He knows what he wants to say, and expresses it distinctly and intelligibly because he so apprehends it. There is also no affectation of the writer, because there is none in the man. There is no pomp in his sentences, because there is no arrogance in his temper. There is no overloading with ornament, because, with the eye of an artist, he sees when he has got enough; and he is sprightly and animated because he catches his tints from nature, and dips his pencil in truth, which is always fresh and racy. . . .

"Washington Irving has been much and justly commended in England and America, but full justice has not yet been done him. Compare him with any of the distinguished writers of his class of this generation, excepting Sir Walter Scott, and with almost any of what are called the English classics of any age. Compare him with Goldsmith, one of the canon-

ized names of the British pantheon of letters, who touched every kind of writing, and adorned every thing he touched. In one or two departments, it is true—that of poetry, and the one or two departments which Mr. Irving has not attempted, and in drama departments, which Mr. Irving has not attempted, and in which much of Goldsmith's merit lies—the comparison partly fails; but place their pretensions in every other respect side by side, who would think of giving the miscellaneous writings of Goldsmith a preference over those of Irving? and who would name his historical compositions with the "Life of Columbus?" If in the drama and in poetry Goldsmith should seem to have extended his province greatly beyond that of Irving, the "Life of Columbus" is a *chef d'œuvre* in a department which Goldsmith can scarcely be said to have touched; for the trifles on Grecian and Roman history which his poverty extorted from him deserve to enter into comparison with Mr. Irving's great work about as much as Eutropius deserves to be compared with Livy. Then how much wider Irving's range in that department common to both, the painting of manners and character! From Mr.

Irving we have the humors of contemporary politics and every-day life in America: the traditionary peculiarities of the Dutch founders of New York; the nicest shades of the school of English manners of the last century; the chivalry of the Middle Ages in Spain; the glittering visions of Moorish romance—a large cycle of sentimental creations founded on the invariable experience, the pathetic sameness, of the human heart, and, lastly, the whole unhackneyed freshness of the West: life beyond the border, a camp outside the frontier, a hunt on buffalo ground, beyond which neither white nor Pawnee, man nor muse can go. This is Mr. Irving's range, and in every part of it he is equally at home. When he writes the "History of Columbus" you see him weighing doubtful facts in the scales of a golden criticism. You behold him laden with the manuscript treasures of well-searched archives, and disposing the heterogeneous materials into a well-digested and instructive narration. Take down another of his volumes, and you find him in the parlor of an English country inn of a rainy day, and you look out of the window with him upon the dripping, dreary desolation of the

back-yard. Anon, he takes you into the ancestral hall of a Baronet of the old school and instructs you in the family traditions, of which the memorials adorn the walls and depend from the rafters. Before you are wearied with the curious lore you are on the pursuit of Kidd, the pirate, in the recesses of Long Island; and, by the next touch of the enchanter's wand, you are rapt into an enthusiastic reverie of the mystic East within the crumbling walls of the Alhambra. You sigh to think you were not born six hundred years ago, that you could not have beheld those now deserted halls as they once blazed in triumph, and rang with the mingled voices of Oriental chivalry and song, when you find yourself once more borne across the Atlantic, whirled into the Western wilderness, with a prairie wide as the ocean before you, and a dusky herd of buffaloes, like a crowded convoy of fleeing merchantmen, looming in the horizon and inviting you to the chase. This is literally "*nullum fere genus scribendi non tigit nullum quod tetigit non ornavit.** Whether any thing

* "There was almost no kind of writing which he did not touch, or which, touching, he did not adorn."

like an equal range is to be found in the works of him on whom the splendid compliment was first bestowed it is not difficult to say."

CHAPTER XXXVII.

MR. IRVING was one of the not very numerous class of writers who become rich by authorship; and, whatever may be thought of his lack of business capacity otherwise, certain it is that his transactions with his several publishers indicate no such deficiency.

From most of his works he shrewdly managed to reap a double harvest, English and American; selling at once his copyrights to his English publishers, and leasing them to his publishers at home. Thus we have the following exhibit, nearly as presented by his biographer:

AMOUNTS REALIZED FROM THE SALE OF COPYRIGHTS IN ENGLAND:

Sketch-Book, £467 10s., or about	$2,338 00
Bracebridge Hall	5,250 00
Tales of a Traveler	7,875 00
Life of Columbus	15,750 00
Companions of Columbus	2,625 00
Conquest of Granada	10,500 00
Tour on the Prairies	2,000 00
Abbotsford and Newstead	2,000 00
Legends of Spain	500 00
Alhambra	5,250 00
Astoria	2,500 00
Bonneville's Adventures	4,500 00
Amount	$61,088 00

AMOUNTS REALIZED IN THE UNITED STATES FOR LEASES OF COPYRIGHTS:

Columbus	$3,000 00
Abridgment of Columbus	6,000 00
Conquest of Granada	4,750 00
Companions of Columbus	1,500 00
Alhambra	3,000 00
Tour on the Prairies	2,400 00
Abbotsford and Newstead	2,100 00
Legends of the Conquest of Spain	1,500 00
Astoria	4,000 00
Bonneville's Adventures	3,000 00
Knickerbocker, Sketch-Book, Bracebridge Hall, and Tales	4,200 00
Receipts for the last four works previous to 1828	19,500 00
Further lease of these four and other works	8,050 00
Amount for leases of copyright	$63,000 00

After the arrangement with Mr. Putnam for the uniform edition of his works, Mr. Irving, up to the time of his decease, received from his publisher, (besides the stereotype and steel plates, valued at $17,000)	$88,143 00
Add the foregoing amount from leases	63,000 00
Add also the foregoing amount from English copyrights	61,088 00
Amount received in his life-time	$212,231 00
Add the amount received in four years after his death	34,237 00
Whole amount from his writings up to 1864	$256,468 00

Hence it is certain that Irving's picture of "Poor Devil Author" was but very slightly applicable to himself.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

OF the religious character of Washington Irving there seems to be but slight and not very satisfactory notices. That he was, throughout, a believer in Christianity there is no reason to doubt; while yet we cannot but regret that the religious element, as with too many accomplished writers, is so much wanting in all the varied and extensive range of his numerous works. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh" and the pen writeth; and we have a right to infer that if the religious sentiment had been of much prominence in the mind and heart of the illustrious author there would have been a fuller revelation of it in his voluminous compositions.

As he grew old we detect a wish for religious confidence and peace. In a letter written when fifty-seven years of age to his sister, Mrs. Van Wart, alluding to their brother Ebenezer, he writes: "I think him one of the most perfect examples of the Christian character that I have

ever known. He has all father's devotion and zeal, without his strictness. Indeed, his piety is of the most genial and cheerful kind, interfering with no rational pleasure or elegant taste, and obtruding itself upon no one's habits, opinions, or pursuits. I wish to God I could feel like him. I envy him that indwelling source of consolation and enjoyment which appears to have a happier effect than all the maxims of philosophy or the lessons of worldly wisdom."

At the age of sixty-five, and ten or eleven years previous to his death, Mr. Irving connected himself with the Episcopal Church in his neighborhood, and we may hope that his latter days were days of devotion and prayer. At the same time we are pained that amid the protracted illness from which he never recovered there is but little expression of religious confidence and hope, and that the Divine consolations were so little alluded to, and apparently so scantily enjoyed.

By the time the last volume of his "Washington" was undertaken Mr. Irving's health had begun seriously to decline, and it grew worse and worse as the work proceeded. Asthma, accompanied with cough, nervousness, and

consequent interruption of sleep, were his prominent symptoms. With some brief intervals of reviving and more hopeful prospects, he continued, on the whole, to decline, until on the evening of November 28, 1859, as he was preparing to retire for the night, he fell and instantly expired.

On the third day following, a beautiful Indian summer day, and as the sun was sinking to his "golden rest," was laid in his chosen resting-place, by the side of her that bore him, the remains of WASHINGTON IRVING.

THE END.

1870

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Adams, Charles, 1808-1890

Memoir of Washington Irving. With selections from his works, and criticisms. Carlton and Lanahan ([1870])

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